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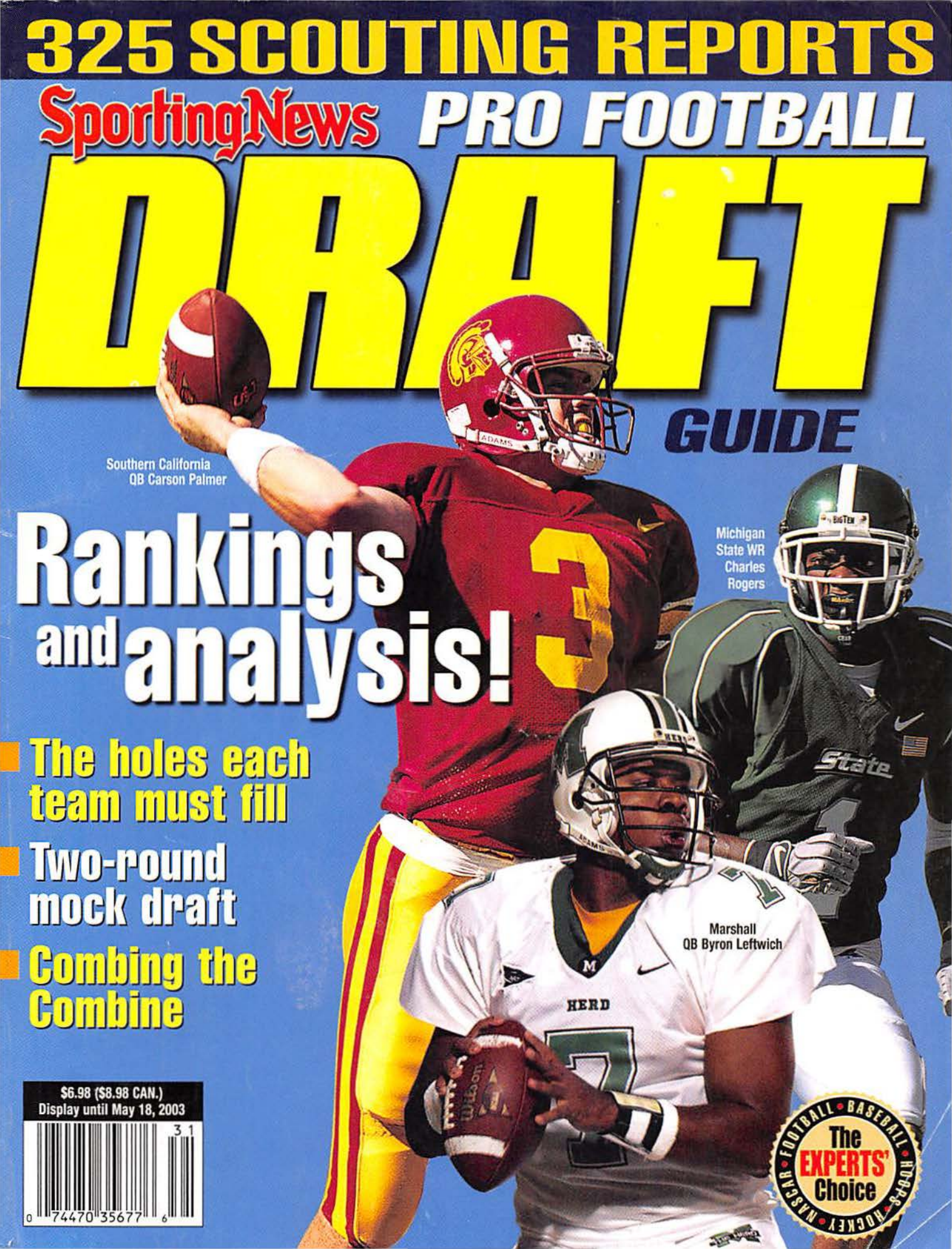

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Michigan State WR Charles Rogers

Marshall QB Byron Leftwich

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Letter from the Senior Managing Editor

We were putting the finishing touches on this issue of the *Pro Football Draft Guide*, our fifth, when I started feeling nostalgic. I dug up our very first edition, published way back in 1999 (another millennium, for cryin' out loud), and flipped through the pages.

I have to admit, I love that magazine. No one had ever published anything like it, and it was full of great analysis and information on the 1999 draft class. It was awesome. But as I look back, I see how far we've come.

We ran a lot more feature stories back then, and one thing we've learned is that most readers crave player analysis far more than player profiles. So, except for "Scouting the Draft," "Combing the Combine" and some very brief "Spotlight" vignettes, we don't do features anymore. Instead, we have ramped up our player-by-player analysis, almost doubling from 35 pages in 1999 to 66 pages in this issue. We cover more players, grade each one and provide more thorough analysis. We also go deeper into each team's draft needs.

One thing that hasn't changed is our partnership with The War Room. Headed by Gary Horton, a former NFL scout and college coach, The War Room has been with us from the start. Gary and his team of football scouts, led by the incomparable Todd McShay, watch and grade hundreds of college prospects in person and on film. They know prospects like Jon Gruden knows camera lenses, and with all the hours they put in, they get about as much sleep as the Bucs' nocturnal coach. The War Room's exclusive analysis appears in the *Draft Guide* and in another area that deserves a bookmark on your web browser: Draft Central.

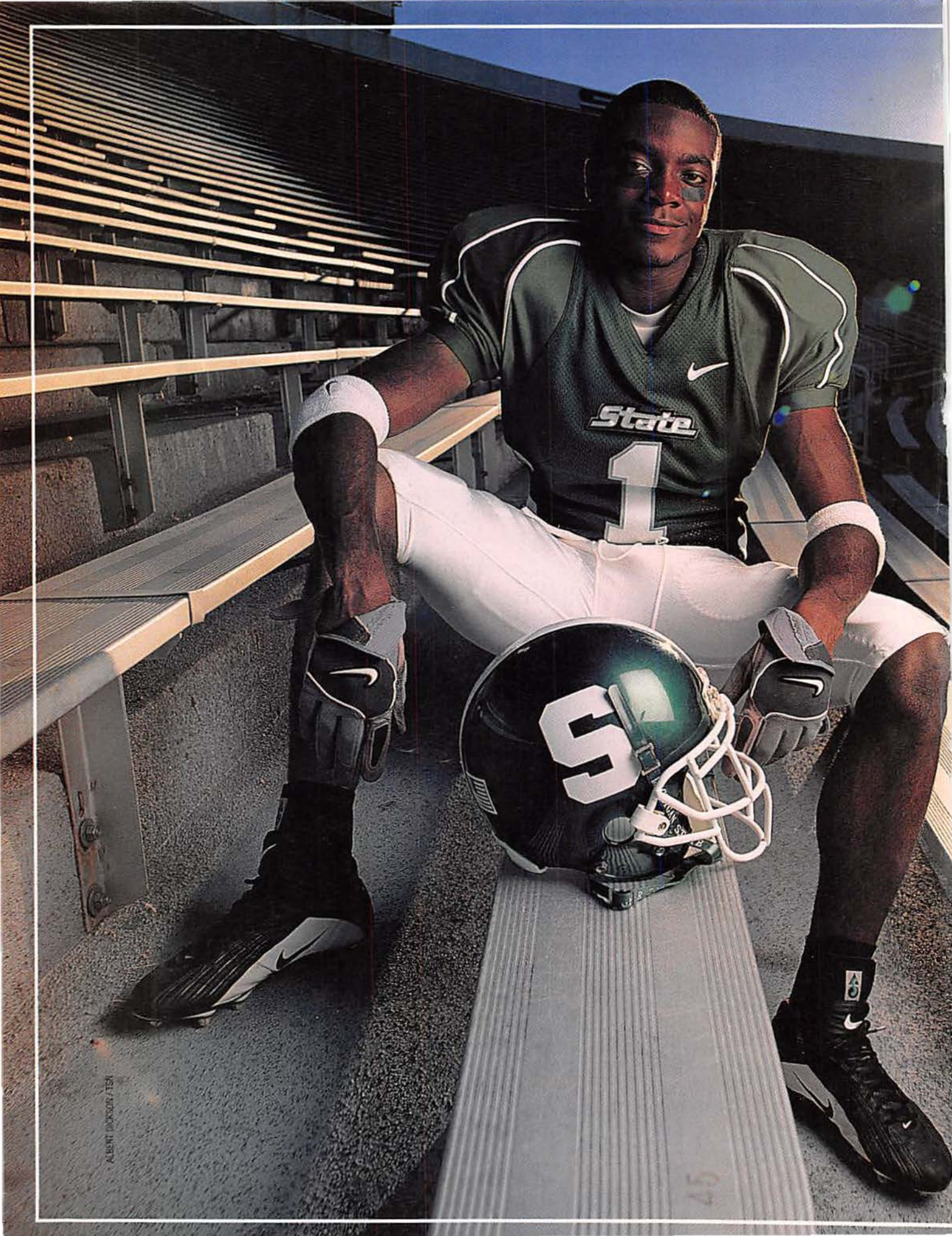
Draft Central is basically this guide on steroids. More players. More measurables on prospects—40 times, vertical jumps, 3-cone drills, the works—all sortable by position. Sporting News senior writer Dan Pompei's analysis in addition to The War Room's. A full seven-round mock draft. Draft Dishes. A live draft board on draft weekend that includes pick-by-pick analysis and a constantly updated list of the best available players at each position. Analysis of rookie free agents after the draft. Even a section on the top NFL veteran free agents, just so you can keep up with other NFL roster movement. It's a perfect complement to the guide you're reading now, and it costs only $29.99 for a 12-month subscription. Check it out at http://ultimate.sportingnews.com/nfl/draft.

While you're at it, consider our Pro Football Ticket. For another $10, you can get access to two other great online features: Preseason Countdown and Pro Football Matchups. From well before the opening of training camp through the entire exhibition season, Preseason Countdown breaks down every team on an ongoing basis and offers scouting reports on every NFL player. In Pro Football Matchups, we analyze every game of the NFL season with keys to success, player-vs.-player matchups, expert predictions and much more. Both products offer an enormous volume of insightful analysis from, you guessed it, The War Room. To sign up for the Pro Football Ticket—that's a year's worth of Draft Central, Preseason Countdown and Pro Football Matchups for just $39.99—go to **http://ultimate.sportingnews.com/nfl**. Enter this code—fbt2003—and you'll get $3 off.

Enough shameless hucksterism. With all of this rich content that keeps NFL fans on top of the game all year long, it's easy to get carried away. But your immediate interest is the draft, so wait no longer. You're on the clock. Dive in!

Mike Nahrstedt

You can write Mike Nahrstedt at mnahrstedt@sportingnews.com or at 10176 Corporate Square Dr., Suite 200, St. Louis, MO 63132.



ALBERT DICKSON/ESN

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COVER PHOTOS: Bob Leverone/TSN: Byron Leftwich. Todd Warshaw for TSN: Carson Palmer. Albert Dickson/TSN: Charles Rogers.

Carson Palmer

JOHN CORDES FOR TSN

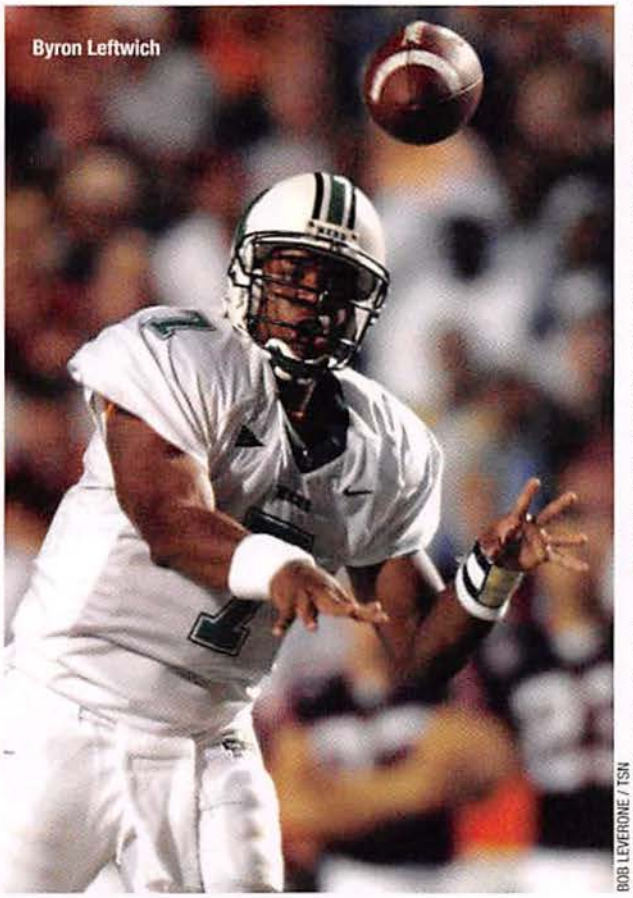
SCOUTING the draft

What makes the top of the 2003 NFL draft so interesting is the quarterback situation. The Bengals, who took Akili Smith with the third pick in the 1999 draft only to see him become a big-time bust, aren't sure whether they want to select another quarterback that high. Even if they do, which one do they take? Despite the prevailing notion that Southern California's Carson Palmer is the top overall prospect, sources close to the franchise have hinted they aren't sure whether Palmer or Marshall's Byron Leftwich is the right choice.

The quarterback-hungry Bears pick fourth, but they also are leery of taking a quarterback that high. General manager Jerry Angelo is nervous because of the long line of first-round quarterback busts in the past 15 years or so. One of those flameouts was Cade McNown, who was drafted by the pre-Angelo Bears in 1999.

The Panthers are the next team interested in taking a quarterback, but they pick ninth and are not in position to give up later draft choices to move ahead of the Bears for Palmer or Leftwich.

So which quarterback is the right fit for which team? Our analysis of Palmer and Leftwich is based on seeing them live and on film. Unlike the Bengals, Bears and Panthers, we won't get a private workout with each player, but we offer this analysis based on the five skill sets commonly used to evaluate quarterbacks.


Byron Leftwich

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Arm strength. Palmer's arm rating is helped by his quick release. He gets rid of the ball quicker than Leftwich, which allows him to fit the ball into some tight spots. But Leftwich has a rifle for an arm. He immediately will join Brett Favre, Drew Bledsoe, Donovan McNabb and Michael Vick in the elite group of NFL quarterbacks who have the strongest arms. **Advantage: Leftwich.**

Accuracy/delivery. Leftwich can be highly accurate when he sets his feet and has time to step into his throws. He is a streaky passer who will get into a "zone" and be able to put the ball in spots downfield where many existing NFL starting quarterbacks can't. But Leftwich also can fall into cold streaks. He will show too much confidence in his arm and force throws. Leftwich's mechanics are inconsistent, and he loses his accuracy when forced to throw on the run. Palmer is more consistent with his mechanics and is more accurate in a wider array of throws. He has a quicker, smoother and more mechanically sound delivery. He also is better on the run. **Advantage: Palmer.**

Field vision. Palmer worked against faster pass rushers, better athletes at linebacker and in the secondary and more complex defensive schemes than Leftwich did in the Mid-American Conference. But we still believe Leftwich sees the field better. Palmer makes more mistakes under pressure, and though he improved his decision-making as a senior, he still makes a throw or two every game that makes us wonder whether he understood the defense he was facing. Leftwich has a better feel for studying film, reading defenses, picking up the blitz and looking off the safety. **Advantage: Leftwich.**

Running ability. This is the area that separates Palmer. Leftwich is a tough quarterback who can bounce off defenders and throw with defenders hanging from his legs. But he is overweight, has marginal speed and isn't a threat to scramble. Leftwich also is coming off an injury (a hairline fracture in his lower left leg) that bothered him for part of his senior year and kept him from working out at the postseason all-star games and at the Scouting Combine. But doctors who checked Leftwich's leg at the Combine said his rebab was progressing well. Palmer doesn't have great speed (4.75), but it's serviceable. He has quick feet, can buy second chances, is an accurate passer on the run and shows enough elusiveness, toughness and speed to pick up first downs with his legs. **Advantage: Palmer.**

Pocket awareness. Leftwich has a good feel for the pocket around him. He does a nice job of beating the blitz with his arm, and he shows enough mobility occasionally to sidestep the rush. Palmer will make more mistakes when pressured than Leftwich, but Palmer does a much better job of avoiding the rush with his feet. He's quicker and is more capable of creating second-chance looks by scrambling. **Advantage: Palmer.**

Leftwich is the better passer, but Palmer is the better overall quarterback. It makes sense for the Bengals to proceed with caution rather than proclaiming Palmer their pick as early as the Texans did with David Carr last year. It won't make sense if Cincinnati passes on Palmer with the first overall pick.

That said, Leftwich won't be a disappointment. His leg injury shouldn't be a recurring problem, and though he doesn't have great mobility, he has a chance to be an elite passer similar to Bledsoe.

If the Panthers are in position to draft Palmer or Leftwich with the ninth pick, it means the Bengals and/or the Bears made the wrong decision.

Bennie Joppru

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

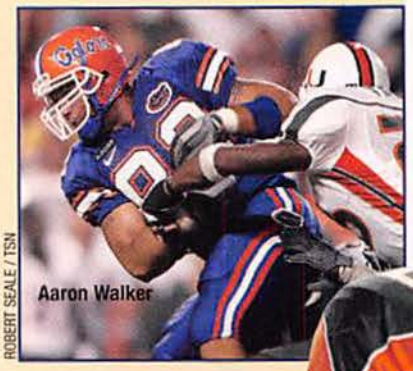
Tight end trend

The ability of Shannon Sharpe and Tony Gonzalez to create mismatches with their athleticism has made other offensive coordinators jealous for years. But Sharpe and Gonzalez no longer are the only tight ends capable of routinely beating defenders. Top athletes such as Baltimore's Todd Heap, Atlanta's Alge Crumpler, the Giants' Jeremy Shockey, New England's Daniel Graham, Seattle's Jerramy Stevens, Miami's Randy McMichael and Oakland's Doug Jolley were drafted in the past two years, leading to a tight end rebirth. As a result, almost every NFL team wants in on the action.

Although the tight end class this year is average, there are a handful of good athletes who could emerge as the next McMichael:

Jason Witten, Tennessee. Witten, the highest-rated tight end in the class, still needs to improve his blocking but is an impressive receiver. His hands and feel for coverage are excellent. Though he doesn't have Sharpe- or Shockey-type speed, Witten is tough and athletic as a route runner and can power ahead for extra yards.

Dallas Clark, Iowa. Clark is smaller than Witten, but his hands are just as good, and he might be more dangerous after the catch. Clark averaged a wide receiver-like 17.3 yards per catch last year as a junior.


Aaron Walker

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

Bennie Joppru, Michigan. After starting just three games as a junior and entering last year with 32 career receptions, Joppru caught 53 passes last season. Joppru lacks great size and doesn't have elite speed, but he catches everything thrown near him.

Aaron Walker, Florida. Walker is raw because the Florida offense often had him on the sideline when it used three- and four-receiver sets. Walker may not be ready to make an immediate splash, but he has the athleticism and frame to develop into a threat as a receiver and a fine starter.

Trent Smith, Oklahoma. Smith had more success in college than most on this list. In his last three seasons, he combined for 138 receptions and 1,283 yards. But Smith will fall to the middle rounds because he weighs only 232 pounds and doesn't have much room left on his frame to grow.

George Wrighster, Oregon. Wrighster, somewhat surprisingly, was an early entry. He is unpolished, but he averaged 13.9 yards on 41 receptions as a first-year starter in 2002. He has a lot of upside because of his athleticism and because he continues to add weight and strength.

Early risers, divers

Although it was clear underclassmen such as Michigan State wide receiver Charles Rogers and Miami wide receiver Andre Johnson were ready for the draft, many of the 46 other players who declared early operated in more of a gray area. Of that group, here are three who jumped too soon and three who didn't:

Should have stayed in school

LaBrandon Toefield, RB, LSU. Toefield's decision doesn't make sense. He tore his ACL in the 2001 SEC championship game, then broke a bone in his arm last year and played in only nine of 13 games. He should have returned to Baton Rouge, where he would have been the full-time starter, and proved his durability.

Chris Clemons

STEPHEN MORTON FOR TSN

Chris Clemons, LB, Georgia. Clemons was not a full-time starter before last season, and then he missed one game because of injury and didn't start two others. He finished as the Bulldogs' ninth-leading tackler. Clemons has the physical tools to make it in the NFL, but he needed more time to develop those tools.

Ian Scott, DT, Florida. He missed significant time at Florida because of two knee injuries, and he took a step backward in 2002. Scott could get drafted as high as the second round, but if he had returned to school and played like he did as a sophomore, he could have been a first-rounder in 2004.

Smart moves

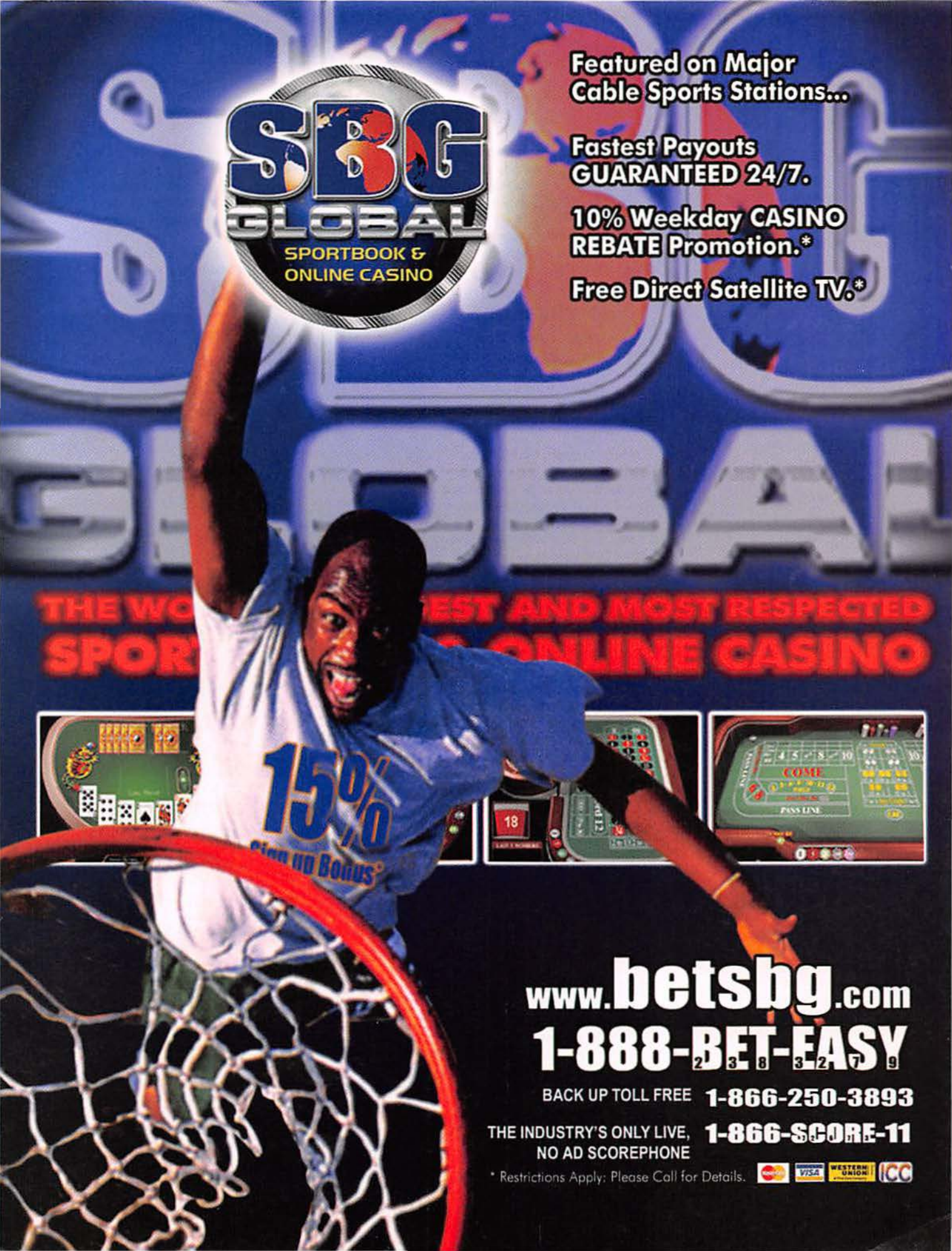
Musa Smith, RB, Georgia. He could have improved his all-around skills with another season in college, but his value never would have been as high. Georgia's top six offensive linemen will not be back, so Smith's production undoubtedly would have declined.

Willis McGahee, RB, Miami. Instead of returning to school and risking the possibility of splitting carries with Frank Gore, McGahee put the pressure on the NFL. His rehab from a severe knee injury is going smoothly, and it wouldn't be a shock if a team took a chance on him at the end of the first round.

Terry Pierce, ILB, Kansas State. He is coming off a season in which he had 110 tackles, including 16 for loss, and five sacks. It would have been hard for him to improve on that. Pierce also did his homework. The linebackers class this year is as poor as it has been in the last five years, which increases Pierce's value.

Willis McGahee

BOB LEVERONE / TSN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Paradise finds

June Jones has turned a downtrodden Hawaii program into one that has won nine or more games in three of his four years as coach. Jones significantly has improved the talent base by recruiting top athletes in Hawaii and on the mainland. A former head coach of the Falcons and Chargers and a longtime offensive assistant in the NFL, Jones has developed those athletes into NFL prospects.

From 1997-99, not one Hawaii player was drafted. In the past three drafts, Hawaii produced five draft picks, including Denver wide receiver Ashley Lelie, who went in the first round last year. There are six former Hawaii players who played under Jones on NFL rosters, and the class this year could double that number:

Vince Manuwai, G. Manuwai has short arms and lacks experience as a run blocker, but he is one of the more athletic offensive linemen in the draft. He should be one of the top three guards selected.

Wayne Hunter, OT. It was surprising he came out early after spending just one year on the offensive line after converting from defense. But Hunter has very good feet, is a proven pass protector and has the tools to develop his run-blocking skills.

Pisa Tinoisamoa, OLB. He's a bit of a hybrid outside linebacker/strong safety, but he shows great quickness, instincts and toughness. Look for a team to take a chance on him early on the second day of the draft. At a minimum, he will be a good special teams player and nickel linebacker.

Chris Brown, ILB. Brown is not much of an athlete, but he is big, strong, physical and technically sound. A team could take a chance on him in the late rounds as a reserve.

Lui Fuata, G. Fuata is not great in any one area, but he will get some looks late in the draft because Jones forced him to learn multiple positions. Fuata also can play center and long snap.

Mat McBriar, P. He is a bit of an unknown because he got limited opportunities, thanks to the Warriors' high-flying offense. But McBriar has the strongest leg in the draft and should be a late-round selection.

Rush or bust

With so many wide-open offenses in the NFL, defenses must pressure the quarterback with the front four so linebackers can drop into coverage. As a result, speed rushers never have been in higher demand.

The trouble for NFL scouts, though, is that for every Dwight Freeney, there seems to be a Courtney Brown. The Packers, for example, spent a first-round pick in 2001 on Jamal Reynolds, who has three sacks in two years. But in the fifth round of the 2000 draft, they took Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila, who had 25½ sacks over the past two seasons.

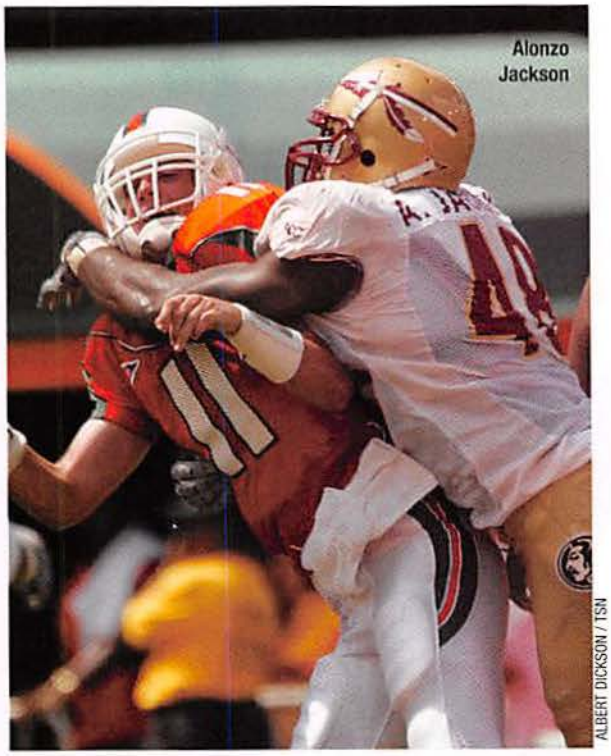
The ends class this year is loaded with pass-rush specialists, most of whom put up good numbers in college. These players figure to be drafted in the first three rounds. Some appear to be good values; others look like potential busts:

Good values

Terrell Suggs, Arizona State. Suggs will be a top-10 pick, and he's worth every penny of the rookie contract he will sign. Suggs is a little bit bigger, faster and stronger version of Freeney, who had 13 sacks as a rookie for the Colts.

Alonzo Jackson, Florida State. Jackson will be a good value late in the second round or early in the third. He had a bit of a roller-coaster career at Florida State, but he had 13 sacks as a senior, plus three in the Hula Bowl. Jackson lacks elite speed, but he's quick and agile enough to make a difference as a situational edge rusher.

Tully Banta-Cain, California. A late addition to the Senior Bowl roster, Banta-Cain took advantage of the opportunity by flashing terrific initial quickness, speed and athleticism. He lacks size and never may be more than a situational edge rusher, which is why he's likely to drop to the third round. But Banta-Cain had 21 sacks the past two seasons, and he is athletic enough to make an impact.


Alonzo Jackson

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

Jerome McDougle

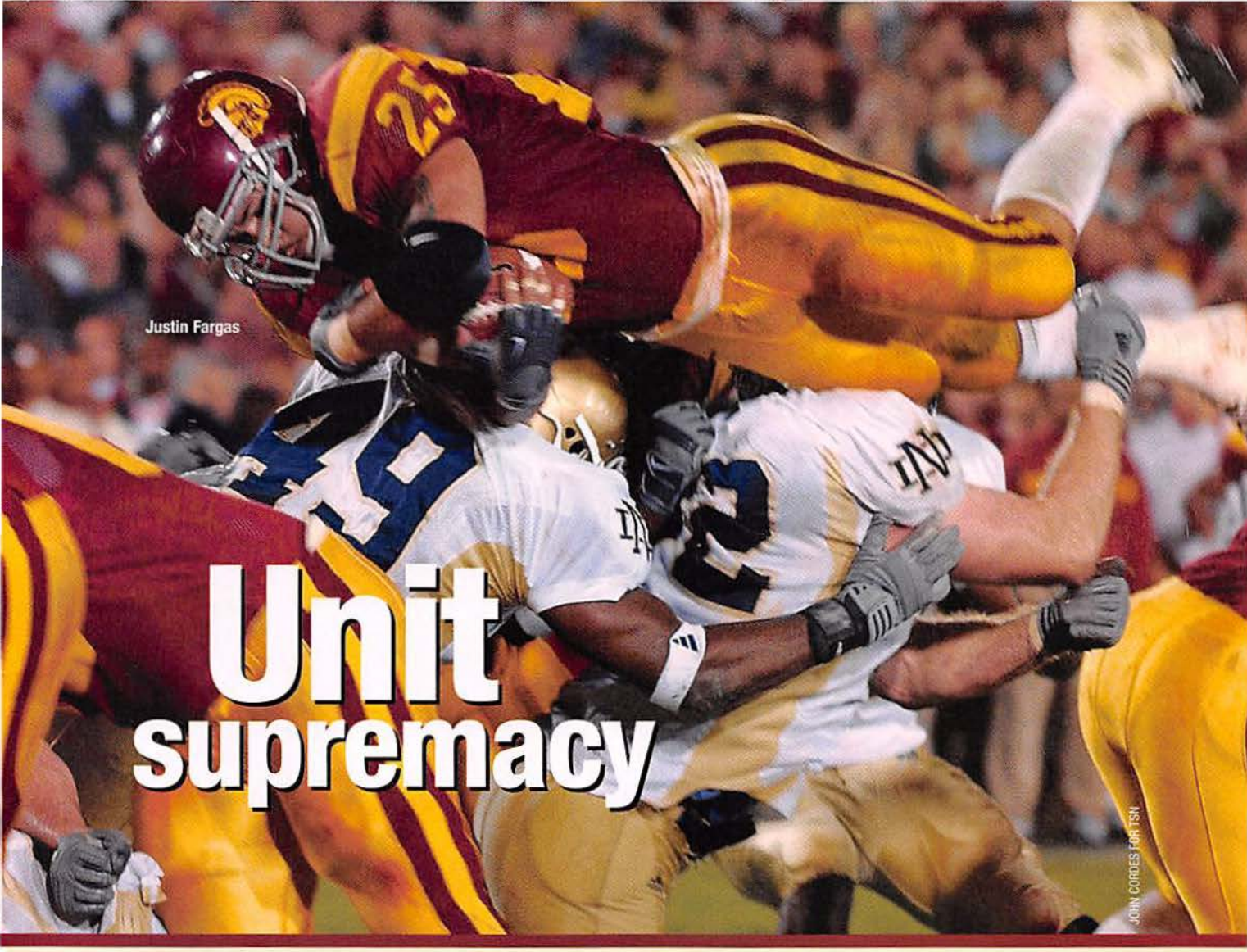
JOHN DUNN FOR TSN

Potential busts

Jerome McDougle, Miami. He has the athleticism, explosiveness, speed and power, but his durability problems, lack of experience and marginal height make him a risky first-round pick.

Dewayne White, Louisville. White was one of the nation's top speed rushers and playmakers the past three seasons. But though he flashes great tools on film, he has had trouble staying healthy, his technique is poor and he takes too many plays off for a second-round prospect.

Calvin Pace, Wake Forest. Pace was an All-American as a senior with 22 tackles for loss and eight sacks. And though he might develop into an adequate starter if he continues to add bulk, he lacks the initial burst and top-end speed that it takes to rush the passer consistently in the NFL.



JOHN CORDES FOR TSN

Unit supremacy

Past drafts boasted prospect-laden units such as the Miami secondary in 2002 and the Michigan offensive line in 2001. But there never has been a draft with so many units loaded with NFL potential as this one.

Units with multiple prospects make it easy for scouts to rank players comparatively. For example, when studying the Hurricanes on film last year, there was no question Phillip Buchanon was a better cover corner than Mike Rumph.

The presence of so much talent on one unit also can be deceiving. For instance, all of the attention defensive end Julius Peppers received from North Carolina opponents made defensive tackle Ryan Sims look better than he really was at times.

The following is a breakdown of the top units with three or more NFL prospects:

Alabama defensive line. T Jarret Johnson; Es Kindal Moorehead and Kenny King. Johnson was the most consistent of the three, but he lacks great size and might move to end. Moorehead lacks ideal speed and might move inside. King likely will move to end and could be the last of the trio drafted.

Georgia offensive line. Ts George Foster, Jon Stinchcomb and Kareem Marshall; Gs Kevin Breedlove and Alex Jackson; C Ian Knight. Foster is a probable first-round pick, and Stinchcomb isn't far behind. Jackson is the better of the two guards. Marshall and Knight are late-round prospects.

Georgia linebackers. OLBs Boss Bailey and Chris Clemons; ILB Tony Gilbert. Bailey is the top outside linebacker in the draft. Clemons came out early even though he wasn't ready, but he is physically gifted and should be drafted, along with Gilbert, in the middle rounds.

Iowa offensive line. Gs Eric Steinbach and Ben Sobieski; T David Porter; C Bruce Nelson. Steinbach should be the first guard selected and has shown the ability to play left tackle. Nelson, whose stock is rising, could be drafted late on Day 1. Sobieski and Porter are late-round prospects.

Miami defensive line. Es Jerome McDougle, Andrew Williams, Jamaal Green, and Cornelius Green; Ts William Joseph and Matt Walters. Joseph's and McDougle's stock dropped as seniors, but they still should go in the first round. Williams, Green and Green are Day 2 edge-rushing specialists. Walters could be a surprise as a one-gap tackle but likely won't be drafted until early on the second day.

Penn State defensive line. Ts Jimmy Kennedy and Anthony Adams; E Michael Haynes. Kennedy is the draft's premier defensive tackle prospect. Haynes' and Adams' stock rose with strong senior seasons and Senior Bowl play.

Southern California running backs. Justin Fargas, Sultan McCullough and Malaefou MacKenzie. Fargas got the fewest snaps of the three backs during his career because of transfer and durability problems, but he will be drafted the highest because of his tools.

Wisconsin offensive line. Ts Ben Johnson and Jason Jowers; C Al Johnson. The Johnsons are cousins, and both are probable first-day selections. Al likely will be the second center drafted; Ben will go closer to the end of the first day. Jowers has limited upside, and his draft status is iffy.

High above the rest

None of the following receivers is a first-round prospect, but they all will be aided by their height in a league in which the trend is toward taller wideouts:

Teyo Johnson, 6-6, Stanford. Instead of bulking up to move to an H-back position, Johnson, the tallest receiver in the class, spent his offseason shedding weight and time off his 40 time to appeal to teams in need of a tall, vertical threat. He likely will go in the second or third round.

Justin Gage, 6-4, Missouri. Gage has good size and a basketball background but doesn't always play as big as he should. His production at Missouri was outstanding—156 receptions his final two seasons—but to make it as a Joe Jurevicius-type receiver, Gage will have to become more physical and aggressive.

Kassim Osgood, 6-4, San Diego State. One of the biggest surprises in the class, Osgood took advantage of a pass-happy system at SDSU to prove to scouts his hands are as good as his size. But he lacks speed and is more of a second-day, possession-receiver prospect.

Mike Bush, 6-5¼, Washington State. Bush has terrific height and leaping ability, and he could become a weapon in the red zone. But his speed and consistency are in question.

Walter Young, 6-4, Illinois. He played second fiddle to Brandon Lloyd at Illinois, and Young likely will be no more than a complementary receiver in the NFL. However, he's an attractive late-round possession-receiver prospect because of his size and soft hands.

DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

Mike Bush

Sleepers from all levels

Every year, NFL scouts scour the country for low-profile, small-school players who won't cost them a pick on Day 1 but have the potential to provide great returns. This year's class had a wide variety of sleeper prospects from all levels of play. Below are the top four sleepers by division.

Division I-A: Kevin Curtis, WR, Utah State. Curtis played two years at Snow Junior College (1996-97), then was out of football for three years before transferring to Utah State in 2001. Curtis still needs to add bulk and become stronger, but he has good speed and put up 174 receptions the past two seasons. He is a mid-round prospect who could develop into a quality No. 3 starter.

Division I-AA: Cliff Washburn, DE, The Citadel. After exhausting his basketball eligibility at The Citadel, Washburn used his final year of college eligibility to play football. He finished with 20 tackles for loss and 12 sacks as a rush end. Washburn is extremely raw but has the measurables to warrant a late-round pick.

Division II: Drayton Florence, CB, Tuskegee. For the second year in a row, Tuskegee has produced a prospect at cornerback. Last year, Roosevelt Williams was drafted by the Bears in the third round. Florence is not as far along in his development as Williams was and could slip to Day 2, but he has a nice combination of size and speed. Free safety could end up being his best position in the NFL.

Division III: Ryan Hoag, WR, Gustavus Adolphus. He was the only Division III player invited to the NFL Scouting Combine. He started his college career on a soccer scholarship at Wake Forest, then transferred to Gustavus Adolphus College in Minnesota, where he played football and ran track. Hoag is far from a finished product, but he's a terrific raw athlete who runs the 40 in the 4.4s and improved every season as a receiver and return specialist.

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MOCK DRAFT 2003

The War Room maps out the first two rounds of the NFL draft

*Denotes underclassman

1. Cincinnati 2-14 (2002 record)
Carson Palmer, QB, USC

The Bengals have reservations about taking a quarterback No. 1 after the failure of 1999 top pick Akili Smith. But we're confident Palmer, who improved his draft value more than any other senior in 2002, will become a Bengal. He always had the physical skills of a first-round quarterback, and last season he showed he had the mental capacity of one.

2. Detroit 3-13
Charles Rogers, WR, Michigan State*

The Lions desperately need to bolster their wide receivers unit, and Rogers is the premier player in a strong receivers class. In our opinion, he's the best all-around receiving prospect to come out of the college ranks since Keyshawn Johnson in 1996.

3. Houston 4-12
Jimmy Kennedy, DT, Penn State

The Texans have the most needs to fill and the highest odds of trading their top pick. Because a handful of teams want to move into this spot, we don't expect them to keep the pick. If they do, Kennedy is the best value. He would be an ideal nose tackle in their 3-4 defense.

4. Chicago 4-12
Byron Leftwich, QB, Marshall

G.M. Jerry Angelo is not sold on taking a quarterback this high, and there is a good chance the Bears will trade down. Because the free-agent quarterback class is so weak, we think the Bears will relent and draft Leftwich, who has the arm and cold-weather experience to be a perfect fit for Chicago.

5. Dallas 5-11
Terrell Suggs, DE, Arizona State*

Coach Bill Parcells is looking for a pass rusher, and Suggs would be a good fit. Though undersized, Suggs is the best pass rusher in this class and would have an immediate impact on a unit that finished 31st in sacks last season.

6. Arizona 5-11
Terence Newman, CB, Kansas State

Cardinals officials plan to take a defensive player in the first round, and Newman might be their guy. He and Duane Starks could form a formidable cornerback duo for years.

7. Minnesota 6-10
Rien Long, DT, Washington State*

Long, a late addition to the underclassman list, made the right decision. The Vikings want to draft the best available defensive tackle or cornerback, and from what we hear, Long is their man.

8. Jacksonville 6-10
Andre Johnson, WR, Miami (Fla.)*

The Jaguars could have gaping holes at cornerback and defensive end, but their No. 1 need is at receiver, where age is catching up with Jimmy Smith and the team has no legitimate No. 2. Other than Charles Rogers, Johnson is the only can't-miss receiver in the draft.

9. Carolina 7-9
Jordan Gross, OT, Utah

The Panthers would love for Leftwich to fall this far, but that's not likely to happen. Their plan is to draft the best available player with their first pick and draft a quarterback in the second round. They also need a tackle, and Gross is the best one in this year's class.

10. Baltimore 7-9
Eric Steinbach, G, Iowa

The Ravens' biggest need on the offensive line is right tackle. Kwame Harris might be the better position fit, but the versatile Steinbach is the better overall lineman.

11. Seattle 7-9
Dewayne Robertson, DT, Kentucky*

Robertson is one of the fastest rising players in the draft. He's big, quick and explosive and immediately would upgrade the Seahawks' run defense.

12. St. Louis 7-9
Kwame Harris, OT, Stanford*

The most sensible pick is Harris, who would be an instant upgrade over last year's starting right tackle, John St. Clair. Harris has room for improvement but should be ready to start immediately.

13. Washington 7-9
William Joseph, DT, Miami (Fla.)

The Redskins' defensive line needs major repairs, and Joseph would be the best available tackle or end. He did not have a great senior season, but we believe he could wind up being the best defensive tackle in this class.

14. New England (from Buffalo) 9-7
Kevin Williams, DT, Oklahoma State

The Patriots want to add bulk at tackle, and the 301-pound Williams would complement Richard Seymour. Williams was the most impressive defensive tackle at the Senior Bowl.

15. San Diego 8-8
Johnathan Sullivan, DT, Georgia*

The Chargers need defensive line help, and Sullivan is the best value available. He would help the interior pass rush and give much-needed rest to aging Jason Fisk and oft-injured Jamal Williams.

16. Kansas City 8-8
Marcus Trufant, CB, Washington State

The Chiefs have not given up on William Bartee, but Trufant immediately could push Bartee and Eric Warfield for a starting job.

17. New Orleans **9-7**
Andre Woolfolk, CB, Oklahoma
Saints officials likely will take the best available cornerback, and though Woolfolk has limited experience at the position, his upside is tremendous.

18. New Orleans (from Miami) **9-7**
Jason Witten, TE, Tennessee*
The Saints are rumored to want a tight end with one of their two first-round picks. Though this might be a bit early for Witten, he is the best tight end in the class.

19. New England **9-7**
E.J. Henderson, ILB, Maryland
Henderson is the best middle linebacker available and would provide the physical presence in the middle the Patriots' defense lacked last season.

20. Denver **9-7**
Jerome McDougle, DE, Miami (Fla.)
McDougle needs more bulk, but you can't teach his type of speed and explosiveness as a pass rusher. The Broncos could use those qualities opposite Trevor Pryce.

21. Cleveland **9-7**
George Foster, OT, Georgia
Upgrading the offensive line remains the Browns' top priority. Though it's risky to draft Foster this high because of injury concerns, he still has a great upside.

22. New York Jets **9-7**
Boss Bailey, OLB, Georgia
The Jets need more speed at outside linebacker. Bailey's stock has fluctuated, but he is a tremendous athlete and has exceptional speed and coverage skills.

23. Atlanta **9-6-1**
Taylor Jacobs, WR, Florida
Michael Vick needs receivers, and it's likely the Falcons will address the need with their first pick. There always is concern about Gators receivers coming into the NFL, but Jacobs had a strong week of practice at the Senior Bowl.

24. Indianapolis **10-6**
Kenny Peterson, DE, Ohio State
Peterson's ability to platoon at end and tackle could make him a perfect fit for Tony Dungy's versatile one-gap defensive line.

25. New York Giants **10-6**
Chris Kelsay, DE, Nebraska
We're not as high on Kelsay as others are, but he projects as a late first-round pick, and the Giants might be looking to replace Kenny Holmes.

26. San Francisco **10-6**
Brandon Lloyd, WR, Illinois*
Defensive tackle is a huge need for the 49ers, but there likely won't be a tackle with value available this late. The 49ers also need a No. 3 receiver, and Lloyd would be a perfect fit for their West Coast offense.

8
ANDRE JOHNSON

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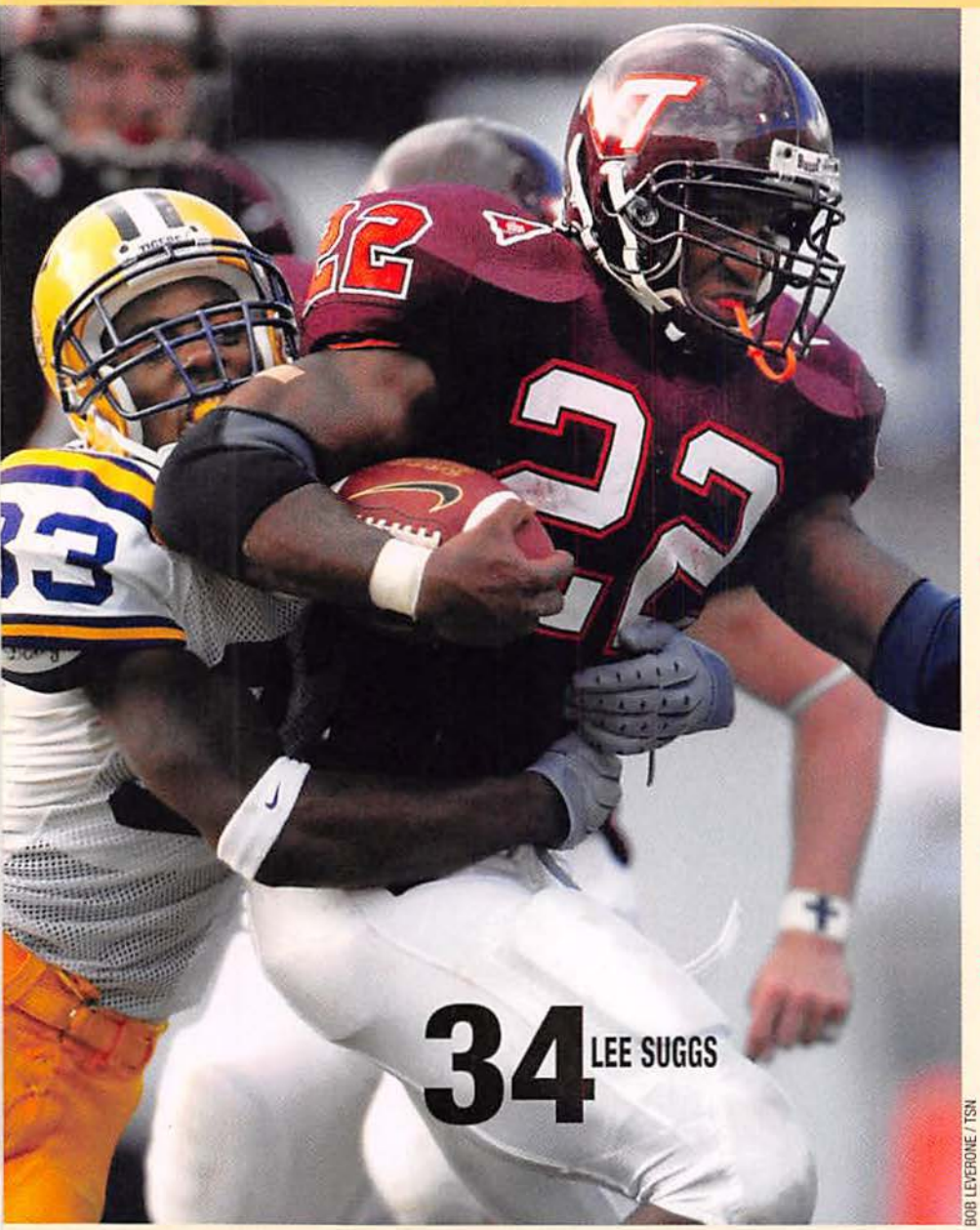

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27. Pittsburgh 10-5-1
Mike Doss, S, Ohio State
The Steelers want to improve their secondary. If a cornerback of value was left on the board, they likely would draft him, but Doss is the best available defensive back on our board.

28. Tennessee 11-5
Larry Johnson, RB, Penn State
If the Titans draft Johnson, a power back similar to Eddie George, it will be so he eventually can replace George, not complement him.

29. Green Bay 12-4
Rex Grossman, QB, Florida*
The Packers would like to address another need with this pick, but it might be time for them to think about grooming Brett Favre's successor. Grossman is the No. 3-rated quarterback in the class, and it might do him good to learn behind Favre for a season or two.

30. Philadelphia 12-4
Michael Haynes, DE, Penn State
The Eagles have the flexibility of drafting the best available athlete, but their biggest needs are defensive end and middle linebacker. Haynes might be overvalued a bit, but don't be surprised if a team takes a chance on him in Round 1.

31. Oakland 11-5
Jeff Faine, C, Notre Dame*
Because Barret Robbins' future is in question, center has become an area of need for the Raiders. Faine is the type of experienced, intelligent player who could start as a rookie.

32. Oakland (from Tampa Bay) 11-5
Anquan Boldin, WR, Florida State*
The Raiders can go in many directions with this pick, but Boldin is worth the risk. He's raw, but he's a special athlete who would have time to learn the ropes from future Hall of Famers Jerry Rice and Tim Brown.

SECOND ROUND

33. Cincinnati
Ty Warren, DT, Texas A&M
The Bengals need to address the defensive line early, and Warren should be available.

34. Detroit
Lee Suggs, RB, Virginia Tech
Surrounding quarterback Joey Harrington with talents such as Rogers and Suggs would make for an exciting future.

35. Chicago
Dallas Clark, TE, Iowa*
The Bears have plenty of other needs, but an athletic, pass-catching tight end could help enliven their passing game.

36. Houston
Bryant Johnson, WR, Penn State
Johnson is a big, steady receiver who would provide quarterback David Carr with a consistent, reliable target.

37. Arizona
Kyle Boller, QB, California
The Cardinals need a pass rusher, but Boller would be hard to pass up if he's on the board.

38. Dallas
Eugene Wilson, CB, Illinois
The Cowboys are in dire need of a cornerback. Wilson doesn't have great size or speed, but he's a playmaker.

39. Jacksonville
Terry Pierce, ILB, Kansas State*
Pierce, the second-best inside linebacker in the draft, would challenge Wali Rainer for his starting job right away.

40. Minnesota
Rashean Mathis, CB, Bethune-Cookman
The Vikings likely will draft a cornerback here. Though Mathis is raw, he has terrific size and speed.

41. Baltimore
Dennis Weathersby, CB, Oregon State
Weathersby would be a good fit here, especially if Gary Baxter plays safety.

42. Seattle
Dewayne White, DE, Louisville*
The Seahawks need defensive line help. Though White can be inconsistent, he was extremely productive in college.

43. St. Louis
Gerald Hayes, ILB, Pittsburgh
The Rams aren't satisfied with their group of linebackers overall, and Hayes could push for

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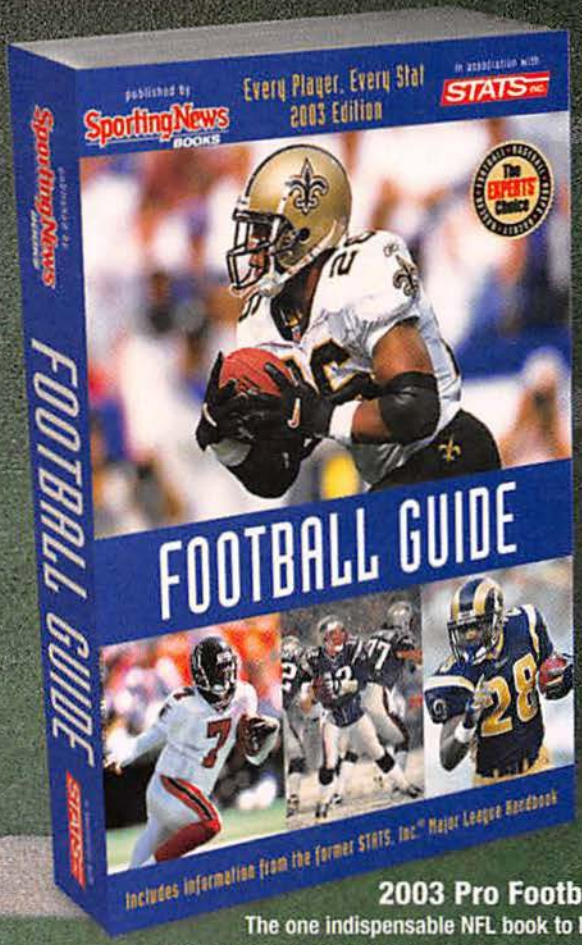

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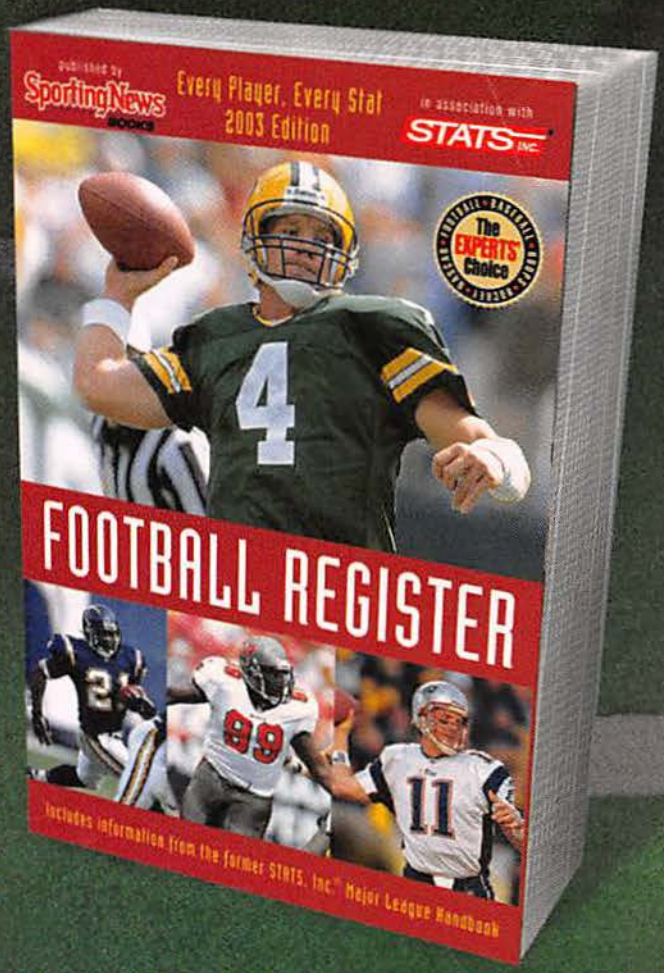

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PAUL NISELY / TSN

a starting job right away.

44. Washington
Kelley Washington, WR, Tennessee*
From what we hear, Tennessee's Washington is back to 100 percent physically. If that's true, he won't be available this late in the second round.

45. Carolina
Chris Simms, QB, Texas
The Panthers might not find their quarterback in the first round, but they'll have a choice of a few good ones in the second. Simms is a risk, but he'll have at least a year to develop behind Rodney Peete.

46. San Diego
Vince Manuwai, G, Hawaii
The Chargers want to strengthen their offensive line. Manuwai needs more experience as a run blocker, but he's a terrific athlete and a great value this late.

47. Kansas City
Cory Redding, DE, Texas
Redding never elevated his game at Texas, but he has rare physical tools and at least could provide situational pass-rushing help as a rookie.

48. Buffalo
LaMarcus McDonald, OLB, TCU
Without a pick in the first round, the Bills would be hard-pressed to ignore their need for a defensive tackle, but McDonald also fills a need at outside linebacker.

49. Miami
Jon Stinchcomb, OT, Georgia
The Dolphins will look to draft a left tackle with this pick, their first of the draft. Stinchcomb must improve his strength, but he's an exceptional value here.

50. New England
Onterrio Smith, RB, Oregon*
The Patriots need a running back with more speed and better receiving skills than Antowain Smith has, and Onterrio Smith is the perfect match.

51. Denver
Dave Ragone, QB, Louisville
If the Broncos don't take Grossman in the first round, Ragone would be a good value in the second. Despite his senior-year difficulties, Ragone has very good tools.

52. Cleveland
Tyler Brayton, DE, Colorado
The Browns need defensive line depth, and a 'tweener end/tackle such as Brayton could provide exactly what they're looking for.

53. New York Jets
Nick Eason, DT, Clemson
Eason is a bit of a risk because of durability problems, but he stayed healthy as a senior and has an impressive combination of size, power and quickness.

54. New Orleans
Troy Polamalu, S, USC
The Saints will look for an inside linebacker or safety with this pick, and Polamalu would be a steal at No. 54.

55. Atlanta
Al Johnson, C, Wisconsin
Johnson could push for a starting job right away on a mediocre Falcons offensive line.

56. New York Giants
Brett Williams, OT, Florida State
Williams was overrated going into last season, but he's still a quality right tackle prospect and a good value at No. 56.

57. San Francisco
Kindal Moorehead, DE, Alabama
If the 49ers go with a receiver in the first round, they'll have to circle back to the defensive line in the second round.

58. Indianapolis
Sammy Davis, CB, Texas A&M
Davis is the right fit at the right position right here. He could excel in the Colts' cover 2 defense.

59. Pittsburgh
Bennie Joppru, TE, Michigan
Aside from their secondary needs, the Steelers should draft a pass-catching tight end to develop behind Mark Bruener.

60. Tennessee
Teyo Johnson, WR, Stanford*
The Titans are in search of a playmaking receiver with size, and Johnson fits the description.

61. Philadelphia
Sam Aiken, WR, North Carolina
Aiken could challenge for the Eagles' No. 4 receiver job right away and eventually push for a starting job.

62. Green Bay
Eric Manning, DT, Oregon State
There isn't a middle linebacker worth taking here, so the Packers could go with a big defensive lineman such as Manning.

63. Oakland
Alonzo Jackson, DE, Florida State
The Raiders will look to add a pass-rush specialist on the first day, and Jackson would be a good value this late.

64. Tampa Bay
Willis McGahee, RB, Miami (Fla.)*
The Super Bowl champs can afford to take a chance on McGahee's rehabilitation with the last pick of Round 2.

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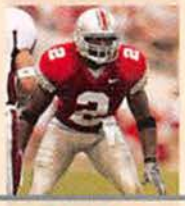
STACKING the BOARD

By The War Room

	QB	RB	FB	WR	TE	OT	G
1st ROUND	Carson Palmer (1) Byron Leftwich (5) Rex Grossman (20) Kyle Boller (32)	**Larry Johnson (28)** 		Charles Rogers (2) Andre Johnson (7) Taylor Jacobs (21) Anquan Boldin (31)	Jason Witten (30)	Jordan Gross (6) Kwame Harris (12) George Foster (23)	Eric Steinbach (9)
2nd ROUND	**Dave Ragone (44)** Chris Simms (53) 	Lee Suggs (34) Onterrio Smith (47) Chris Brown (56)		Bryant Johnson (40) Brandon Lloyd (41) Kelley Washington (45) Teyo Johnson (51)	**Dallas Clark (43)** 	Brett Williams (52) Jon Stinchcomb (59)	Vince Manuwai (33) Montrae Holland (55)
3rd ROUND		Musa Smith (76) Cecil Sapp (88) Willis McGahee (94) Justin Fargas (101)		**Sam Aiken (62)** Talman Gardner (67) Nate Burleson (73) Shaun McDonald (79) Kareem Kelly (92) Doug Gabriel (102)	Aaron Walker (64) Bennie Joppru (70) Robert Johnson (85)	Ben Johnson (75) Tony Pashos (83) Wayne Hunter (98)	Derrick Dockery (68) Torrin Tucker (81)
4th ROUND	Ken Dorsey (109) Kliff Kingsbury (137) Seneca Wallace (144)	Artose Pinner (125) LaBrandon Toefield (145)	Casey Moore (133) Ovie Mughelli (147) Brandon Drumm (150)	Billy McMullen (112) Justin Gage (115) Kassim Osgood (124) Kevin Curtis (131) Tyrone Calico (139) Bobby Wade (146) J.R. Tolver (148) Amaz Battle (152)	Spencer Nead (104) Donald Lee (118) Mike Pinkard (122) Trent Smith (132) Mike Seidman (140) George Wrighster (151)	Jeremy Bridges (107) Jordan Black (110) Steve Sciullo (127) Will Ofenheusle (143)	Anthony Davis (111) Taylor Whitley (135)
5th ROUND	Brad Banks (182) Brian St. Pierre (193) Jason Gesser (201)	Santonio Beard (164) Earnest Graham (168) Domanick Davis (178) Dwone Hicks (189) Kerry Carter (200)	Andrew Pinnock (160) B.J. Askew (176)	Ronald Bellamy (157) Mike Bush (170) Terrence Edwards (175) Walter Young (186) Antwone Savage (199)	L.J. Smith (165) Zach Hilton (180) Doug Zeigler (204)	Gary Byrd (167) Justin Bates (185) Todd Williams (188) Wade Smith (195)	David Diehl (179) Gus Felder (190) Jeff Roehl (202)
6th ROUND	Tony Romo (235) Juston Wood (249)	Quentin Griffin (206) Dahrran Diedrick (228) Sultan McCullough (230) Avon Cobourne (245)	**Justin Griffith (242)** 	Adrian Madise (210) Keenan Howry (214) Dan Stricker (217) Carl Morris (227) Chris Vance (232) Ryan Hoag (248)	Kevin Ware (218) Dan Curley (236) Matt Huebner (244)	Garry Johnson (207) Damian Lavergne (226) Kareem Marshall (234) Robbie Doane (250)	Alex Jackson (212) Jamil Soriano (220) Cedric Williams (231) Greg Schindler (240) Makoa Freitas (246) Dave Petruziello (256)
7th ROUND	Bret Engemann (285) Curt Anes (291) Casey Printers (310) Brooks Bollinger (317)	Derek Watson (262) Malafou MacKenzie (288) Nick Maddox (303) Antoineo Harris (311)	Jeremi Johnson (258) J.P. Comella (280) Chris Davis (301) James Lynch (320)	Michael Hayes (261) Paul Arnold (269) LaTarence Dunbar (278) Bethel Johnson (289) Reggie Newhouse (297) Robert Morgan (305) Cecil Moore (324)	Vishante Shiancoe (259) Lorenzo Diamond (274) Gabe Reid (277) Michael Gaines (290) Sean Berton (323)	Derrick Brantley (263) Seth Wand (275) Tim Provost (282) Mike Saffer (302) Dustin Rykert (312)	Scott Tercero (260) Enoch DeMar (271) Kevin Breedlove (299) Tony Terrell (322)

The War Room shows, round by round, where each player should be drafted based solely on his value. The number in parentheses represents the player's overall ranking among all prospects, regardless of position. Those numbers sometimes don't match up with the rounds because of the overall strength of the draft.

C	DE	DT	ILB	OLB	CB	S	K/P
Jeff Faine (26)	Terrell Suggs (4) Jerome McDougle (22) Chris Kelsay (24) Michael Haynes (29)	Jimmy Kennedy (3) William Joseph (10) Dewayne Robertson (11) Rien Long (13) Kevin Williams (17) Johnathan Sullivan (19) Kenny Peterson (25)	E.J. Henderson (16)	**Boss Bailey (15)**	Terence Newman (8) Marcus Trufant (14) Andre Woolfolk (18)	**Mike Doss (27)** 	
Al Johnson (38)	Tyler Brayton (48) Cory Redding (49) Dewayne White (58)	**Ty Warren (37)** Jarret Johnson (54)	Terry Pierce (36) Gerald Hayes (39)	LaMarcus McDonald (50)	Eugene Wilson (42) Rashean Mathis (46) Dennis Weathersby (57)	**Troy Polamalu (35)**	
Bruce Nelson (82) Dan Koppen (96)	Clint Mitchell (61) Alonzo Jackson (66) Kindal Moorehead (72) Tully Banta-Cain (77) Calvin Pace (99)	Nick Eason (63) Eric Manning (69) Anthony Adams (80) Ian Scott (89)	Bradie James (84)	Nick Barnett (74) Angelo Crowell (86) Victor Hobson (91) Mike Nattiel (97)	Sammy Davis (60) Drayton Florence (78) Shane Walton (90) Roderick Babers (95)	Ken Hamlin (65) Terrence Holt (71) Julian Battle (87) Antwoine Sanders (93) Todd Johnson (100)	
Brett Romberg (136)	Kenny King (103) Andrew Williams (116) Antwan Peek (121) Aaron Hunt (142) Nick Burley (154)	Rashad Moore (105) Matt Walters (113) Matt Leonard (129) Colin Cole (155)	Clifton Smith (117) Lance Briggs (126) Mario Haggan (128) Tony Gilbert (156)	Chris Clemons (119) Pisa Tinoisamoa (134)	Kevin Garrett (108) Ricky Manning (114) Torrie Cox (120) Donald Strickland (130) DeJuan Groce (141) Charles Tillman (153)	Gerome Sapp (106) Nnamdi Asomugha (123) Hanik Milligan (138) Willie Pile (149)	
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Combing the Combine

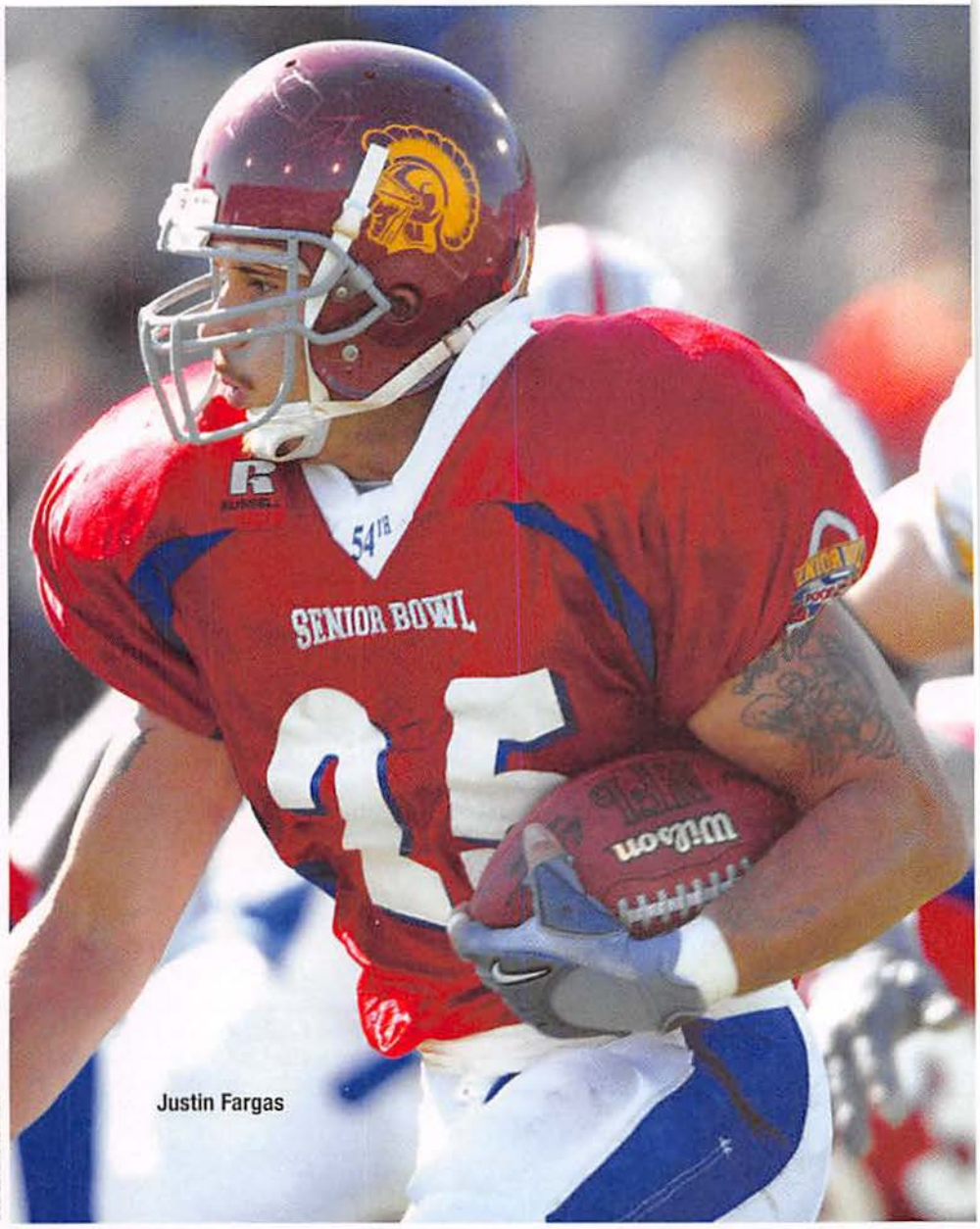
By The War Room

The lowdown on who's rising and falling after the scouting extravaganza in Indianapolis

Change was the theme at the 2003 NFL Scouting Combine. In order to increase the number of participants and help the proceedings run more smoothly, the league extended what used to be a five-day event to a full week in late February.

The other big difference was the interview process. In previous years, teams were allowed to interview as many players as they wanted, for as long as they wanted. This year, in order to create more structure for both the teams and the players, the NFL mandated that teams submit a list of 60 players they wanted to interview and limit those interviews to 15 minutes each. During the interview, teams were given a "two-minute warning," with a buzzer sounding when the 15 minutes were up. Players were instructed by Combine officials to simply stand up and leave once the buzzer went off.

Though some of the structure changed, the agenda of most of the top players did not. Michigan State wide receiver Charles Rogers and Iowa guard Eric Steinbach were two of only a few top draft prospects who worked out. Most first-round prospects such as Penn State running back Larry Johnson, USC quarterback Carson Palmer and Miami wide receiver Andre Johnson showed up at Indianapolis solely to get themselves measured, take their physicals and go through the interview process. They refused to run or be tested in drills, preferring to wait for individual workouts scheduled to take place at the friendly confines of their respective schools sometime in March.



Justin Fargas

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

A positional breakdown of those who participated in the Combine:

Quarterback

Before Florida's **Rex Grossman** and Miami's **Ken Dorsey** broke a sweat in Indianapolis, they improved their draft status. Though Grossman is short by NFL quarterback standards, he was measured at 6-1, not the 6-0 or shorter some expected him to be. Dorsey, on the other hand, silenced some critics who were worried about his ability to bulk up by weighing in at 208 pounds, 14 more than what he recorded at the East-West Shrine Game in January.

Although **Kyle Boller** was instructed by his agent not to work out, NFL teams convinced the California quarterback that such a stance would be a mistake because he is one of the better athletes at the position. Boller responded by running the second-best 40 time of any quarterback (4.63), behind the 4.51 of Iowa State's **Seneca Wallace.** Louisville's **Dave Ragone** posted the worst 40 time of any quarterback (5.06). Grossman, Dorsey, Palmer and Iowa's **Brad Banks** all worked out for NFL scouts but did not run. Marshall's **Byron Leftwich**, still rehabilitating from a stress fracture in his lower left leg, did not run or work out. He did, however, get a clean bill of health from the doctors who evaluated him at the Combine, which was an important step for him.

Running back

Justin Fargas stole the show. After a roller-coaster college career that included multiple injuries and a transfer from Michigan to Southern California, Fargas continued the momentum he created in the second half of his senior season by showing up at 219 pounds—12 pounds more than his senior year playing weight. He also bench-pressed 225 pounds 27 times and ran a 4.36 40 on the RCA Dome's notoriously slow turf.

Middle Tennessee's **Dwone Hicks** did not run and measured only 5-10, but he did have an impressive workout, registering 29 bench-press reps.

Alabama's **Santonio Beard** helped his draft stock. A junior entry, Beard displayed a good combination of size and speed (he ran a 4.53 40) and teams are looking at him as possibly a fourth-round pick.

LSU's **Domanick Davis** has very good hands and was an upper-echelon return specialist in college, but his 4.71 40 at the Combine hurt him in the eyes of those considering his potential as an NFL third-down back and return man.

Oklahoma's **Quentin Griffin** may have solidified a spot in the fourth or fifth round by running a 4.52. Griffin (5-8, 194) does not have the size to be a full-time back in the NFL, but he could be a versatile backup.

Top running back prospects such as Penn State's Johnson, Virginia Tech's **Lee Suggs**, Colorado's **Chris Brown**, Oregon's **Onterrio Smith** and Georgia's **Musa Smith** did not run. Because of health reasons, Alabama's **Ahmaad Galloway** (knee), Miami's **Willis McGahee** (knee) and Kentucky's **Artose Pinner** (leg) also didn't run.

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Rex Grossman

Colorado's **Brandon Drumm**, one of the highest-rated fullbacks in the draft, did not help himself by running a 4.75 40, the worst time of any participating running back.

South Carolina's **Andrew Pinnock**, who is more of a Mike Alstott type than a traditional blocking fullback, showed up at 265 pounds, 10 pounds heavier than his previous weigh-in. Conversely, Stanford's **Casey Moore** showed up 10 pounds lighter, at 240 pounds. That's not a good weight for Moore, who, as a Fred Beasley-type blocking back, will need to add weight to be successful in the NFL.

Syracuse's **Chris Davis** helped himself by posting one of the fastest fullback times—4.55. Davis is a 'tweener running back/fullback who, if for no other reason, will be selected in a late round because of his impressive combination of size and speed.

Wide receiver

Charles Rogers, **Andre Johnson**, Missouri's **Justin Gage**, Tennessee's **Kelley Washington**, Penn State's **Bryant Johnson**, Stanford's **Teyo Johnson**, Arizona State's **Shaun McDonald** and Virginia's **Billy McMullen** did not run.

Of the receivers who ran, Middle Tennessee's **Tyrone Calico** was the fastest at 4.39. He also had a strong workout and could have solidified an early second-day selection. Texas A&M's **Bethel Johnson** ran the next-best time with a 4.40. After redshirting in 2001 with a spleen injury, Johnson had a decent senior season in '02. Others who improved their stock with strong 40 times included Florida State's **Talman Gardner** (4.46), USC's **Kareem**

Boss Bailey

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Kelly (4.46), TCU's **Adrian Madise** (4.49), Oklahoma's **Antwone Savage** (4.51) and Oregon's **Keenan Howry** (4.52).

Many others didn't fare as well. San Diego State's **J.R. Tolver** ran a disappointing 4.68, and college teammate **Kassim Osgood** ran a 4.71. Tolver led the nation with 128 receptions and Osgood finished third with 108, but Tolver could drop to the late rounds, and Osgood's chances of being drafted late on Day 1 greatly diminished.

Florida State's **Anquan Boldin** (4.65), North Carolina's **Sam Aiken** (4.65), Notre Dame's **Arnaz Battle** (4.75) and Illinois' **Brandon Lloyd** (4.65) were among the possible first-day prospects who ran disappointing times.

Tight end

Teams have been concerned with the passiveness and lack of leadership ability shown by Tennessee's **Jason Witten**, widely regarded as the top tight end. So it didn't come as a surprise when Witten, who planned not to participate in the bench press, was talked into it by the bench-press attendant. Though Witten benched an impressive 28 reps, the fact he succumbed to the pressure was looked upon as a weakness.

The majority of the top tight ends, including Witten, Michigan's **Bennie Joppru**, Oregon's **George Wrighster** and Arizona State's **Mike Pinkard**, did not work out. Florida's **Aaron Walker** did work out—and benefited. He displayed soft hands as a receiver, showed good agility and also had one of the top 40 times of the tight end class (4.68).

Eastern Washington's **Dan Curley** ran the fastest time of any tight end (4.59). He is undersized at 232 pounds and has had problems staying healthy throughout his career, but running that well might have won him a spot in the middle rounds. Rutgers' **L.J. Smith** and Morgan State's **Vishante Shiancoe** helped themselves by running 4.62s in the 40.

Auburn's **Robert Johnson** was the biggest disappointment. He pulled up at the end of his 40 attempt (5.00) with a hamstring strain and did not finish his workout.

Offensive line

Iowa guard/tackle **Eric Steinbach** and Stanford tackle **Kwame Harris** might have closed the gap between them and Utah tackle **Jordan Gross**, who has been regarded as the top offensive-line prospect. Although Gross showed up in good shape and weighed in at 300 pounds, there were concerns he lacked great lower-body strength. Steinbach also is undersized, but he showed up at 300 pounds, bench-pressed 225 pounds a respectable 28 times and posted the fastest time among offensive linemen (4.88 40).

Harris was described by three teams that interviewed him as "different" because of his intelligence, soft-spoken nature and "deep-thinking" personality. But none of the teams said those traits helped or hurt him. What helped Harris is that he ran a solid 5.18 in the 40 and looked thicker and stronger than Gross.

Hawaii tackle **Wayne Hunter** probably helped himself more than any other offensive lineman. A former defensive tackle with just one year of experience on offense, Hunter is now considered a late-second or early-third round prospect after posting the most bench-press reps (37) among O-lineman and running a respectable 5.15 in the 40.

Georgia tackle **Jon Stinchcomb** wasn't far behind Hunter in terms of improving his stock. He silenced the critics who say he lacks the size and strength to play right away in the NFL by recording 32 bench-press reps and weighing in at 302 pounds. He also ran an impressive 5.06 in the 40.

Georgia tackle **Kareem Marshall**, who looked out of shape and did not work out, and Louisiana Tech tackle **Damian Lavergne**, who bench-pressed 225 pounds 17 times, didn't help themselves.

Defensive line

Miami end **Jerome McDougle** was one of only a few first-round prospects who worked out, and it paid off. McDougle weighed in at 264 pounds, had an exceptional skill-set workout and ran the 40 in 4.69 seconds. Miami tackle **William Joseph**'s draft status has fluctuated all season, but he helped himself by showing up at 305 pounds and looking in shape. One concern with Joseph has been his lack of ideal bulk and lower-body strength, but the additional 18 pounds will help him.

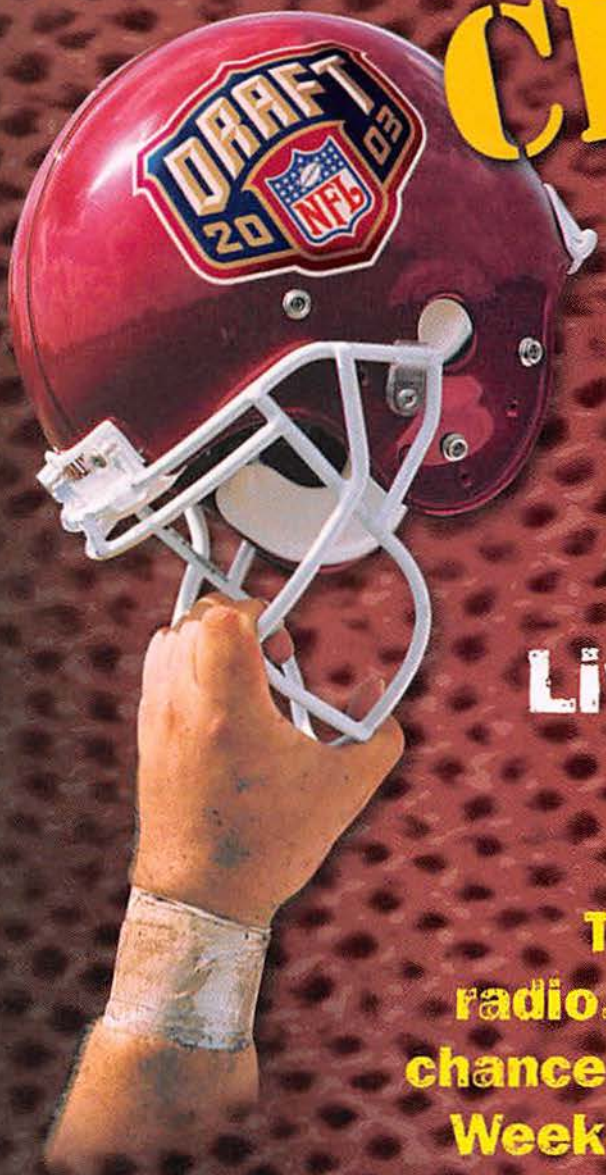
Arizona State's **Terrell Suggs** did not run the 40. He weighed in at an impressive 262, but the Texans, who currently own the No. 3 overall pick, expressed disappointment that he did not work out as a linebacker because, as a team that uses a 3-4 defense, they wanted to see how smooth Suggs was in his drops and in coverage.

Joseph, Suggs, Texas' **Cory Redding**, Ohio State's **Kenny Peterson**, Penn State's **Jimmy Kennedy**, Florida's **Tron LaFavor**, Washington State's **Rien Long** and Kentucky's **Dewayne Robertson** were among the top linemen who did not run or work out. Alabama's **Kenny King** and **Kindal Moorehead** and Wisconsin's **Jake Sprague** all had solid workouts but did not run.

South Florida's **Shurron Pierson**, a late-round prospect and one of the smallest ends in the class, had the best 40 time of the group at 4.62. Pierson's size may dictate a move to linebacker in the NFL. Nebraska's **Chris Kelsay** was among the fastest defensive linemen at 4.71, which almost assures him a spot in the first round. Two more undersized, mid-round end prospects—Cincinnati's **Antwan Peek** and Miami's **Andrew Williams**—helped themselves with fast 40 times. Florida State's **Alonzo Jackson** (4.87) and Fresno State's **Nick Burley** (4.85) each hurt his status with slower times.

Perhaps the biggest disappointment in the group was Penn State's **Michael Haynes**. After recording 13 sacks as a senior and following up with a strong Senior Bowl performance,

DRAFT CENTRAL



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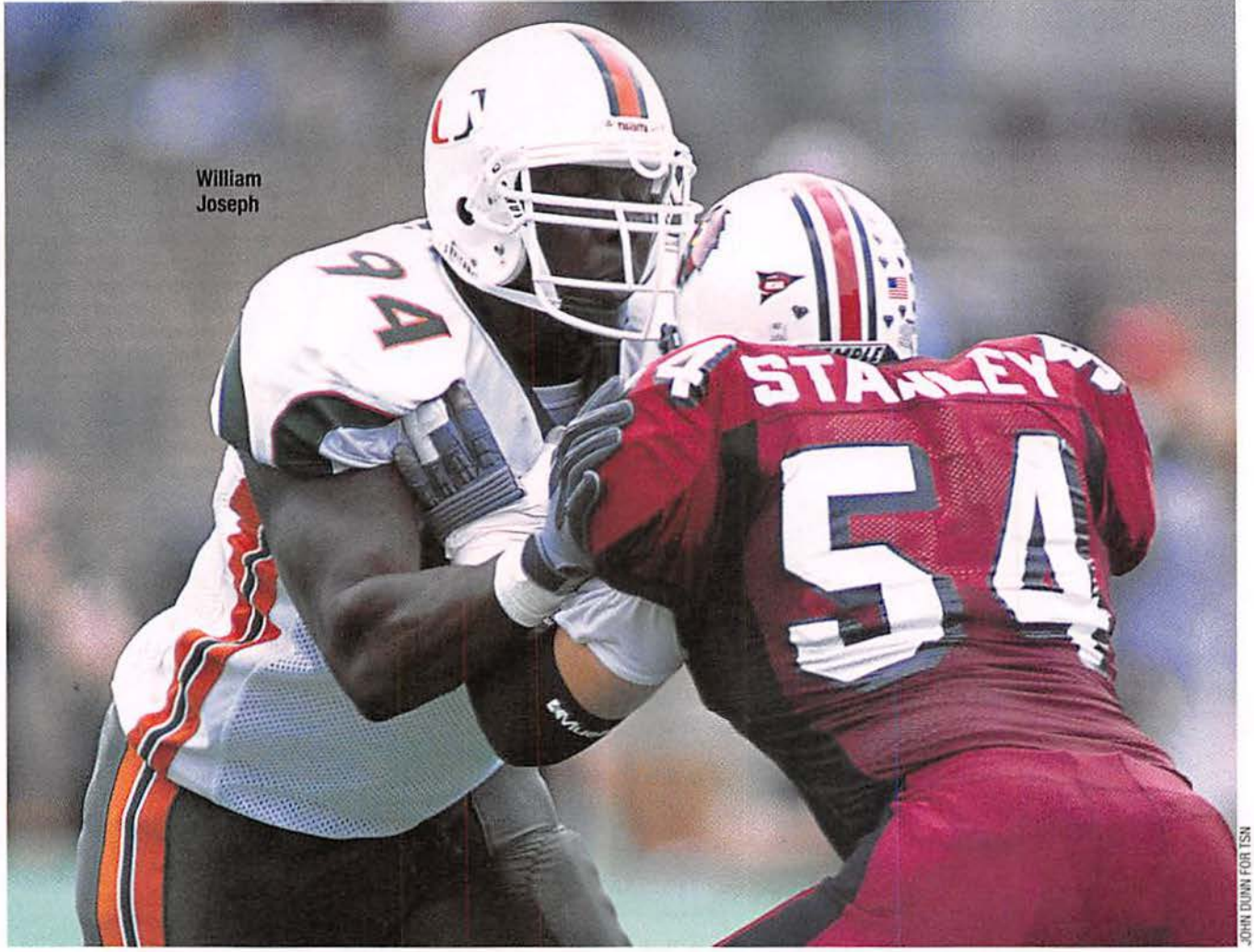

William Joseph

JOHN DUNN FOR TSN

Haynes' draft momentum came to a screeching halt when he ran a 4.86 after injuring his quadriceps during the run. We were told that his workout, held before the injury, was less than special.

Linebacker

Georgia's **Boss Bailey**, the top-rated outside linebacker in the class, was expected to put on a show in his workout, but he slipped on the first backpedal of his first drill and did not return.

Probably the biggest story at the linebacker position was TCU's **LaMarcus McDonald**, who, according to one NFL scout, "choked.. McDonald showed up at 222 pounds, ran a 5.09 in the 40 and reportedly had an awful position workout.

Two late-round sleeper prospects, Mars Hill's **Khalid Abdullah** and West Texas A&M's **Chaun Thompson**, helped themselves with strong workouts. Abdullah ran the 40 in 4.59 seconds and Thompson ran a 4.53.

Oregon State's **Nick Barnett** (4.64), Hawaii's **Pisa Tinoisamoa** (4.61), Iowa State's **Jeremy Loyd** (4.62) and Georgia's **Chris Clemons** (4.65) are outside linebacker prospects who all ran better than average times and had very good workouts. Loyd, a late-round prospect, may have helped himself the most.

The inside linebacker class as a whole ran disappointing times. Arizona State's **Solomon Bates** (4.87), Arizona's **Lance Briggs** (4.78), Auburn's **Mark Brown** (4.93), Mississippi State's **Mario Haggan** (4.88), Texas Tech's **Lawrence Flugence** (4.87) and Syracuse's **Clifton Smith** (4.81) were among the most disappointing.

Georgia's **Tony Gilbert** and LSU's **Bradie James** had strong workouts but did not run. Maryland's **E.J. Henderson** and Pittsburgh's **Gerald Hayes** did not work out.

Secondary

Kansas State's **Terence Newman** had a strong workout and ran an impressive 4.37 in the 40, setting the bar high for the other cornerbacks. And they responded well. Oklahoma's **Andre Woolfolk** (4.43) and Washington State's **Marcus Trufant** (4.46)—the next highest-rated corners—helped themselves with their 40 times, as did Texas' **Roderick Babers** (4.40), Texas A&M's **Sammy Davis** (4.37), Tuskegee's **Drayton Florence** (4.45) and Colorado's **Donald Strickland** (4.46). SMU's **Kevin Garrett** (4.37), Oregon State's **Dennis Weathersby** (4.31) and Wisconsin's **B.J. Tucker** (4.37) also had good 40 times and strong workouts.

But there were others who probably wish they hadn't run, including Mississippi State's **Korey Banks** (4.65), Oregon State's **Terrell Roberts** (4.60) and Clemson's **Brian Mance** (4.62).

The participation of the safeties was adequate. Ohio State's **Mike Doss** didn't work out because of a previous commitment, and three other top prospects—Tennessee's **Julian Battle**, USC's **Troy Polamalu** and N.C. State's **Terrence Holt**—did not work out at all. Two who did—Michigan's **Cato June** and Stanford's **Colin Branch**—pulled hamstrings on their 40 runs and finished with a 4.59 and a 4.40, respectively.

California's **Nnamdi Asomugha** (4.46), Texas A&M's **Terrence Kiel** (4.46) and Bethune-Cookman's **Rashean Mathis** (4.44) helped themselves the most with good 40 times and strong workouts.

Specialists

Although kickers and punters do not have to participate in the bench-press portion of the Combine, Kentucky's **Glenn Pakulak** flexed his muscles and posted 22 bench-press reps—five more than offensive tackle Lavergne.

Tulane's **Seth Marler** might have solidified his spot as the top specialist in the class by connecting on all 12 of his field-goal attempts and showing good leg strength. Hawaii's **Mat McBriar** showed the strongest leg of any punter and Auburn kicker/punter **Damon Duval** displayed the strongest leg on kickoffs. Surprisingly, Idaho State's **Eddie Johnson** may have been the best overall punter in the Combine drills. He had a quick release, very good accuracy and a strong leg. Johnson could wind up getting drafted now.

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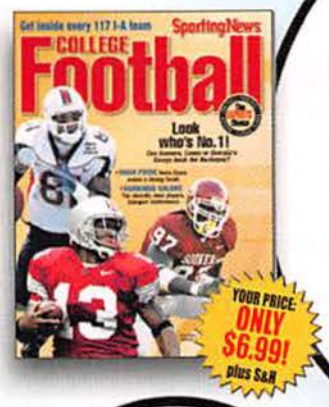

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A GUIDE to the GUIDE

The War Room's grading system

9.0 — 8.0 Franchise player
Demonstrates rare abilities and can create mismatches that have an obvious impact on the game. Is a premier college player who has all of the skills to take over a game and play at a championship level. Rates among the top five players in the nation at his position and is considered a first-round draft prospect.

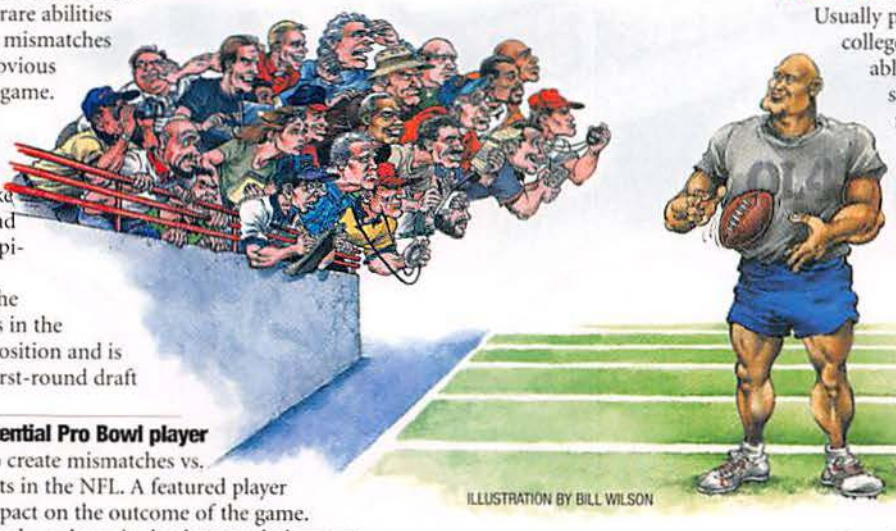


ILLUSTRATION BY BILL WILSON

7.9 — 7.0 Potential Pro Bowl player
Has abilities to create mismatches vs. most opponents in the NFL. A featured player who has an impact on the outcome of the game. Cannot be shut down by a single player and plays on a consistent level each week. Rates among the top 10 at his position and is considered a second-round draft prospect.

6.9 — 6.0 Could start as a rookie
Standout at the college level who is close to being an elite player. Has no glaring weaknesses and usually wins his individual matchups but does not dominate in every game, especially when matched up against the top players in the country. Usually rates among the top third of players at his position and is considered a third-round draft prospect.

5.9 — 5.0 Eventual starter
Gives a solid effort every week but is overmatched vs. the better players in the nation. His weaknesses will be exposed against top competition. He usually is missing something from his game. For example, he has the size and skills to be an outstanding prospect but lacks the speed. Usually rates in the top half of the players at his position and is considered a middle-round draft choice.

4.9 — 4.0 Quality backup
Usually plays at a high level in college but lacks some measurables or skills to play at that same level in the NFL. He might have a lot of developmental qualities or might contribute right away on special teams or in a situational capacity. Usually rates in the second third of players at his position and is considered a fifth-round draft choice.

3.9 — 3.0 Chance to make roster
A player whom teams like something about but who does not have the full package in terms of NFL talent. A lot of times, teams take chances on a player who has character issues or a developmental-type athlete who falls into this grade range. Often, this is a player who comes from a smaller school or did not stand out at the college level. NFL teams are looking for diamonds in the rough with this type of prospect. He usually rates among the bottom third of players at his position and is considered a late-round draft choice or undrafted free agent.

2.9 — 2.0 Not likely to make roster
A player who did not make our initial evaluation list but should be monitored. Especially during the preseason, this kind of player will fluctuate depending upon his performance during his final year of college eligibility.

1.9 — 1.0 Free-agent possibility
A player who lacks NFL measurables and/or skills. A player who likely would not make a solid contribution even as a body in training camp.

About The War Room

Football scouts attend games and practices, watch players on film and write reports on what they observe. It is in this manner that NFL teams determine which players to draft, sign as free agents and acquire in trades. The scouting process is at the core of NFL roster management.

None of the league's 32 scouting departments works for the Sporting News, but we have the next-best thing: The War Room.

The scouts at The War Room do everything their NFL counterparts do, but instead of internalizing this information, they write it exclusively for the Sporting News. The War Room, which wrote most of the *Pro Football Draft Guide*, is dedicated to serving the hard-core football fan with thoughtful, in-depth analysis of NFL and college players, coaches and teams.

"We're trying to run The War Room like an NFL scouting department," says Gary Horton, who founded The War Room in 1996. "We want to be like the NFL's 33rd scouting department."

Horton spent 10 years in the NFL as a scout with Tampa Bay and Cleveland, and another 10 years at the college coaching level with Arizona State and Illinois. His extensive NFL experience and the close relationships he maintains with front-office personnel staffs and coaches around the league allow him to maintain daily communication with virtually every NFL team.

He is assisted by a staff of scouts who have trained under his watchful eye. Together, The War Room scouts break down film of every NFL game, college games and individual footage of college prospects, and they attend training camps and games in person.

"That way, you get a good look at a guy physically and see if he matches up to what you saw on film," Horton says.

The War Room provides exclusive content for Sporting News Radio, TSN's weekly magazine, yearbooks, website (sportingnews.com), Draft Central (ultimate.sportingnews.com/nfl/draft) and Fantasy Source (fantasy.sportingnews.com).

How players are graded

Evaluation criteria by position

Quarterback

Arm strength: Velocity, tight spiral, zip on deep out.
Set-up quicks: Feet, smoothness of drop, body position.
Accuracy: Long and short, catchable ball, forces ball.
Field vision: Locates second receiver, sees the whole field.
Running ability: Threat, avoids rush, quick feet.
Delivery: Quick release, high or low, mechanics.
Ball handling: Good fakes, freezes linebackers.
Leadership: Poise under pressure, moves the team.

Running back

Inside: Quick to hole, vision, cuts.
Outside: Speed to corner, makes cuts, threat.
Elusiveness: Avoids tackles, change of direction, moves, vision.
Power: Balance, breaks tackles, short yardage strength, falls forward.
Blocker: Willing, pass protection, run blocking.
Hands/pass routes: Catches ball out of backfield, tendency to fumble.
Durability: Takes a hit, toughness, stays in the game.
Running style: Slasher, darter, power, second gear.

Tight end/wide receiver

Hands: Concentration, snatches, soft hands.
Routes: Sharp and crisp, body control, fakes, cuts.
Catch long and short: Possession, acceleration, can go deep.
Run after catch: Threat, catches in stride, elusive.
Blocker: Willing, good results, sustains, open field.
Release: Can avoid jam, not held up, physical.
Reacts to ball in a crowd: Comes over middle, shows toughness.
Initial quickness: Accelerates, gets off ball, has extra gear.

Offensive line

Initial quickness: Comes off the ball, feet, beats defensive lineman.
Run blocking: Leverage, control, balance.
Pass blocking: Feet, setup, mirrors, adjusts in space.
Pulls and traps: Hits moving target, adjusts in space.
Use of hands: Gets separation, keeps defensive lineman off, leverage.
Strength: Leverage, moves the pile, can anchor.
Explosion: Finishes block, plays low, has pop.

Defensive line

Against the run: One-gap or two-gap, strength at point of attack, wards off.
Pass rush: Power or finesse, moves, penetration.
Pursuit: Gets over trash, gets to outside, effort.
Tackling: Wraps up, low or high, drags down, power.
Initial quicks: Takeoff, feet, anticipates snap.
Recognition: Sees blocks coming, instincts, finds ball.
Neutralize block: One-on-one, double-teams, traps, anchors.
Key and diagnose: Reads blocks, good feet, sees ball.

Linebacker

Against inside run: Steps up and fills hole, physical, takes on blockers.
Against outside run: Wards off blocks, gets to sideline, pursuit.
Blitz/pass rush: Power or finesse, use of hands, feet.
Key and diagnose: Reads and reacts, gets jump on ball.
Lateral pursuit: Gets over trash, hips, sideline chase.
Tackling: Wraps up, physical, drags down, solid.
Pass drop: Hips and turns, depth, zone coverage.
Pass coverage/hands: Man coverage, hips and turns.

Defensive back

Man coverage: Hips and turns, pedal and acceleration.
Zone coverage: Range, covers ground, deep half, awareness.
Closing quickness: Plant and drive, gets to ball in the air.
Key and diagnose: Reads quarterback, anticipates, in right spot.
Lateral pursuit: Gets over trash, hips, sideline chase.
Tackling: Wraps up, physical, drags down, solid.
Pass drop: Hips and turns, depth, zone coverage.

Scout speak

Terms used by The War Room in evaluating players

Anchor: Offensive lineman's ability to hold his ground against a physical defensive player on a bull rush or blitz.

Diagnose skills: Defensive player's ability to recognize if the play is a pass or run following the snap by reading his keys and using good instincts.

East-west: Ballcarrier who dances too much and is too hesitant.

Gets over trash/moves well in trash: Defensive player who excels at fighting through blocks and bodies to get to the ball.

Get under the offensive tackle and occupy his gap vs. the run: Defensive lineman's ability to use leverage to hold his ground at the point of attack and prevent a runner from coming through the gap that is his responsibility.

Hips and turns: The ability of a defensive back to open his hips without losing speed in transition from a backpedal to a full-out run. Indicates whether a player in coverage can change directions and stay with quicker, shiftier receivers.

Makes plays on the move: Typically, a linebacker or defensive end who is better in space or when allowed to run free than when forced to play in traffic.

Mauler: Player with the size and strength to win most battles in a short area, but usually lacks great mobility.

Measurables/tools: Quantitative measurements of a player such as height, weight, speed and bench press repetitions.

Move-the-chains player: Possession receiver who makes the tough catch in a crowd, knows where the first-down marker is and is a go-to guy on third down.

Nonstop motor: Never stops hustling or takes a play off.

North-south: A ballcarrier who doesn't dance and who gets upfield right away.

Pass pro: Pass protection.

Phone booth: Short area or confined space when close to the line of scrimmage.

Redirect: Player's ability to alter his path or direction to make a block or get to a tackle.

Short-area possession skills/great possession measurables: The size, strength and hands to make the tough catch in traffic.

Short set in pass pro: Offensive lineman who can get out of his stance quickly and get into position as a pass blocker on a three-step drop.

Soft hands/solid hands: Receiver's ability to look the ball in and catch it away from the body without fighting the ball.

Stack and shed: Defensive player's ability to take on a blocker, disengage that blocker and make the play.

Straight-line speed: A runner's speed when he doesn't have to change direction (basically, his 40 time). Some guys are fast when they get to top speed, but slow down when they change directions.

Wave player: Backup player who has the ability to perform well over short periods while the starter rests.

Quarterbacks

Thanks to the rise of Carson Palmer and Kyle Boller as seniors and the decision by Rex Grossman to enter as a junior, this is one of the most talented quarterback classes in recent draft history.

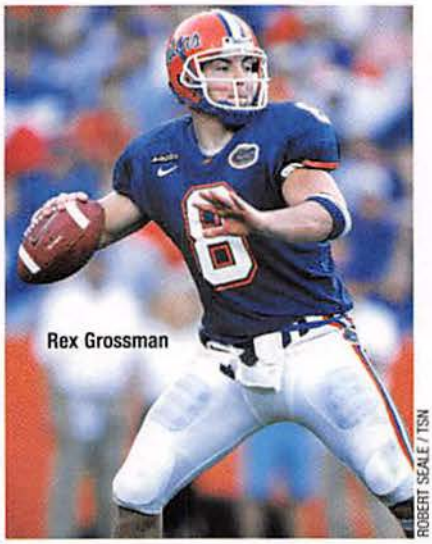
Palmer, with direction from Southern California offensive coordinator Norm Chow, and Boller, under the tutelage of California coach Jeff Tedford, proved they can manage a pro offense mentally. That elevated Palmer to the probable first pick overall and Boller possibly to the first round. Grossman had a bumpy junior season, and there are concerns about his height (6-1) and film-room preparation. But he is considered a first-round prospect and should be the third quarterback drafted behind Palmer and strong-armed Byron Leftwich, who played the second half of his senior season with a bad leg.

Dave Ragone and Chris Simms had disappointing senior seasons but could be drafted in Round 2. Though Ken Dorsey led Miami to two straight national title games, we might not hear his name until Day 2 because of his skinny frame and marginal arm strength. Mid-round prospects Kliff Kingsbury and Jason Gesser have accuracy and experience but lack the arms. Seneca Wallace and Brad Banks have athleticism and arm strength but lack size.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Quarterbacks taken 15	
Round 1	3
Round 2	0
Round 3	1
Round 4	2
Round 5	4
Round 6	1
Round 7	4


Rex Grossman

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

1. Carson Palmer, USC

6-4⅜ 220 4.55 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Brett Favre, Packers

Arm strength: A prototypical pocket passer who has great size and a strong arm. Makes all the necessary NFL throws. Has great zip on the deep out. Has the arm strength to drive the ball downfield. Can fit the ball into tight spots. Can throw across his body and get the ball deep on the move. **Grade: 8.8**

Accuracy/delivery: Has improved mechanics. Has a quick release. Shows good touch. Can change velocities on short routes. Has made strides with his deep-ball accuracy. **Grade: 8.8**

Field vision: Has improved the most in this area. Has started to show a feel for coverages. Got better at his progressions once he was comfortable within system. Makes quick decisions. Consistently can locate safeties before throwing over the middle, which he hadn't done before senior season. **Grade: 8.7**

Running ability: Is quick enough to buy second chances in the pocket. Lacks great speed but can take off and run for first downs. Has learned to slide to avoid contact. **Grade: 8.6**

Intangibles: Is an upstanding person. Has overcome much adversity. Proved to be a good leader and tough player. Isn't the smartest player. Needs several reps within a system. May have some trouble picking up an NFL scheme immediately, but once he grasps it, he can make sound decisions and manage an offense. **Grade: 8.7**

Bottom line: Palmer made huge strides under Chow the past two seasons, culminating with his winning the Heisman Trophy in 2002. Palmer has had the physical skills to develop into an NFL starting quarterback, but only in the past season did he show the mental aptitude. Palmer capped off his magical senior year with a strong Senior Bowl; he was the best player on the practice field all week. He should be the top overall pick. **FINAL GRADE: 8.8**

2. Byron Leftwich, Marshall

6-5⅝ 252 5.10 1st round

NFL comparison: Drew Bledsoe, Bills

Arm strength: Has great size, ideal height, bulk and strength. Can make all the throws. Shows great zip on deep outs and has a strong downfield arm. **Grade: 8.9**

Accuracy/delivery: Very accurate as a pocket passer. Can fit the ball into tight spots where most NFL quarterbacks can't. Hits receivers in stride on crossing routes. Has a quick release. Does well at hanging in the pocket. Changes up his velocity and throws a catchable ball underneath. Seems to lose consistency when he must throw on the run. **Grade: 8.8**

Field vision: Sometimes inconsistent. At times, he excels at seeing the entire field, negotiating safeties and making sound reads, but once in a while he tries to force the ball where even he can't deliver it. Sees the whole field but needs to make better decisions in some situations. **Grade: 8.8**

Running ability: Shows a presence in the pocket and good footwork to avoid the rush. Is a tough runner. Lacks athleticism, however, and has marginal speed. Is not much of a running threat. **Grade: 7.9**

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-3	225	4.60
NFL minimum	6-0	195	5.00

The transition from big, immobile dropback passers to players who can buy extra time with athleticism continues. But quarterbacks still need the arm strength to throw the deep ball, the zip to throw sideline routes, the intelligence to recognize and exploit complex coverages and blitz schemes and the touch to get passes between zones. Strong leadership and character also are at a premium.

ON THE RISE: Kyle Boller, California
His strong arm, quick release and athleticism at the Senior Bowl turned him into a first-round prospect.

ON THE DECLINE: Dave Ragone, Louisville
Poor pass protection and marginal weapons at receiver forced him into bad habits as a senior.

SLEEPER: Curt Anes, Grand Valley State
Marginal height (6-0½) and Division II competition are turn-offs, but he has a West Coast passing style.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Jason Thomas, UNLV
Big-armed and athletic, he looked promising at the end of the 2000 season but regressed the last two years.

STRONGEST ARM: Byron Leftwich, Marshall
Fewer than five current NFL quarterbacks can throw the ball downfield with Leftwich's velocity.

QUICKEST RELEASE: Carson Palmer, USC
A short windup and quick release make him look like he throws the ball harder than he does.

MOST BATTLE-TESTED ARM: Kliff Kingsbury, Texas Tech
Completed 68 percent of passes the past two seasons. Led the nation in attempts and yards as a senior.

BEST IN THE CLUTCH: Ken Dorsey, Miami (Fla.)
It's hard to argue with a 38-2 record and consecutive trips to the national championship game.

MOST DANGEROUS RUNNER: Seneca Wallace, Iowa St.
Might put his running ability to use on special teams before he gets a chance to play quarterback in the NFL.

BIGGEST RISK: Chris Simms, Texas
Possesses a strong arm and a good-looking frame, but is he tough enough mentally to make it in the NFL?

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

Intangibles: Is a tough player and a great leader. A proven winner, he has a great attitude and passion for the game. Has a presence about him. **Grade: 8.8**
Bottom line: Leftwich is smarter, tougher and a better passer than Palmer, but Palmer is the better athlete. Leftwich has great size and a strong arm. When he gets into a rhythm, there are few NFL quarterbacks who are as accurate and have as much zip to fit the ball into tight spots as he does. There are obvious concerns about Leftwich's leg injury as a senior, running ability and playing shape, but he should be drafted within the first five picks. **FINAL GRADE: 8.7**

3. Rex Grossman, Florida*

6-1 220 4.90 **1st round**
NFL comparison: Tommy Maddox, Steelers
Arm strength: Shows adequate zip on deep outs. Has a quick release and a consistent delivery. Lacks elite arm strength, but can make all the necessary throws. Uses a quick release to fit passes into tight spots. At his best when set in the pocket and throwing between the numbers. Has much more zip on throws when rolling right. Doesn't always square his shoulders when rolling left, leading to passes that tend to sail. **Grade: 8.3**
Accuracy/delivery: Has a quick release with a consistent release point. Throws the ball from his ear and over the top. Is very accurate when he sets his feet and follows through. Got into bad habits this season—not setting his feet, bouncing in the pocket and throwing off his back foot. **Grade: 8.2**
Field vision: Sees the whole field, makes progression reads and checks down. Gets lazy at times and locks onto one receiver. Lost confidence in his complementary receivers and offensive line in 2002 and made many hasty, poor decisions. **Grade: 8.0**
Running ability: Is not much of a threat to run but has terrific pocket awareness, above-average quickness and a great feel for when to sidestep the rush. Creates many second chances with his feet. Is tough and somewhat elusive when he runs. **Grade: 8.1**
Intangibles: Gets mixed reviews here. Few show more toughness and better leadership. Handled disappointing season well and took the blame that should have gone to his teammates. Took many hits behind a bad line and played through much pain. Is a leader by example. Does not work hard enough at the mental part, however. **Grade: 7.9**
Bottom line: Grossman could have trouble finding passing windows in the NFL and won't convert many first downs with his feet. He will have to study more film and prepare better because he no longer will get by on pure physical skills alone. He still is an attractive prospect and has the potential to develop into a solid starter. He should be drafted late in the first round. **FINAL GRADE: 8.1**

4. Kyle Boller, California

6-2¼ 221 4.63 **1st round**
NFL comparison: Mark Brunell, Jaguars
Arm strength: Has great natural physical skills. Gets good zip on deep outs and throws downfield well. Ball explodes off his hand, and a quicker release only has helped. **Grade: 8.1**
Accuracy/delivery: With some good coaching, made the biggest stride with his release. Has compacted it and become more consistent and accurate. Can throw accurately on the run. **Grade: 8.0**
Field vision: Game has started to slow down for him. Made more consistent, sound decisions as a senior. Can make progression reads and find the backside receiver. Has cut down on mental mistakes. Still must improve pre-snap reads and ability to consistently find hot receivers vs. the blitz. **Grade: 8.0**
Running ability: Has ideal size and adequate speed. Shows a quick set and the footwork to buy second chances in the pocket. Is impressive with his pocket presence, initial quickness and ability to throw on run. **Grade: 8.2**
Intangibles: Separated his shoulder in 2000 and had a back injury in 2001. Stayed healthy as a senior, proving he can be a winner. Adjusted quickly to a new system. Also became a vocal leader. **Grade: 7.9**
Bottom line: Boller always has had potential, but he put it all together only as a senior. He has ideal NFL size, a strong arm and above-average mobility. Under Tedford, who mentored Joey Harrington at Oregon, Boller responded so well that his draft stock shot up as much or more than Palmer's. Boller had an impressive week of practice at the Senior Bowl. **FINAL GRADE: 8.0**

5. Dave Ragone, Louisville

6-3 246 5.06 **2nd round**
NFL comparison: Daunte Culpepper, Vikings
Arm strength: A lefthander with a quick release. Can run a spread offense and primarily worked out of the shotgun in college. Makes every NFL throw. Shows good zip on his deep outs. Can drive the ball downfield. **Grade: 8.4**
Accuracy/delivery: Shows good touch on short routes. Can change his velocity to throw a catchable ball. Hits receivers in stride in the quick-hitting passing game. Throws off his back foot too often. His accuracy regressed. Tries to do too much at times and tends to force throws. **Grade: 7.0**
Field vision: Doesn't always see the whole field. Must prove he can beat the blitz consistently. Takes chances when pressured and throws too many balls up for grabs. **Grade: 7.1**
Running ability: Has great straight-line speed for his size. Takes a while to get going and isn't very elusive, but has good top-end speed. Is tough; lowers his shoulder and picks up yards after contact. Must learn to slide more. **Grade: 8.2**
Intangibles: Is a well-respected leader. May have tried to do too much with a marginal supporting cast last season, developing bad habits and losing confidence as a result.

SPOTLIGHT

Carson Palmer
Southern California

JOHN CORDES FOR TSN

A punk, that's all. Listen to Carson Palmer and feel his story. He's not ashamed to tell it. The path was laid out for him long ago, a world of much too easy, much too soon.

The star high school quarterback every Division I team in the nation coveted, the comparisons with Troy Aikman. Too bad it took five years at Southern California for the quarterback who had it all finally to reach it all.

"A franchise quarterback," says one AFC scout. "You don't use those words that often."

Early in Palmer's career, who could've known those words ever would describe him? The golden arm and the rusted psyche. It took a heck of a lot of polishing to get it where it is today.

"I was just a kid. I thought I knew something about everything," Palmer says. "I found out I knew a lot about nothing."

You can't blame him. Not only was he the hottest quarterback recruit in years, he instantly was anointed the savior of a stale USC program and a coach (Paul Hackett) whose job security hinged on Palmer's development. Other than that, all he was dealing with was adjusting to college, living alone, having a serious girlfriend and the weight of daily expectations. Piece of cake.

"We all go through it, but I think with Carson, he went through the wringer," says USC wideout Kareem Kelly. "If we lost, it was his fault. If we won, he didn't do enough."

Truth is, Palmer didn't do nearly enough early in his career. But there were plenty of extenuating circumstances. An injury in his sophomore season stunted progress from his freshman year, and the redshirt season and a coaching transition left him flooded with new coordinators, new systems and the same overwhelming expectations. No wonder he was just 16-16 as a starter before 2002, before it all clicked and he became the first Heisman Trophy winner from the West Coast since 1981.

He never really felt comfortable until this season. He panicked too early and too often. He overthrew receivers, he missed reads and forced throws and had as many interceptions (39) as touchdowns. That all changed this past season, when he went from playing like a dazed deer to performing like a strapping stallion. He played with poise, he played with passion and he likely played himself into the first overall pick of the NFL draft.

Palmer always has been on the NFL radar because of his size (6-4⅜, 220) and arm strength. He's glowing on it now. —*Matt Hayes*

Because he spent most of his time in the shotgun, he struggles with footwork off the center exchange. **Grade: 7.4**
Bottom line: Ragone is in a similar mold to former college teammate and current Ravens quarterback Chris Redman: a pure passer who can run the spread offense. Ragone has great arm strength, a quick release and is a much better athlete than Redman. But after a strong junior season, Ragone took some steps backward as a senior. He needs significant work on his mechanics before he can push for a job as an NFL starter. **FINAL GRADE: 7.6**

6. Chris Simms, Texas

6-3⅝ 216 5.25 **2nd round**
NFL comparison: Trent Green, Chiefs
Arm strength: Shows good zip on his deep outs. Has a strong downfield arm. Lacks an elite arm, but his strength is similar to that of the Rams' Kurt Warner. **Grade: 8.0**
Accuracy/delivery: Shows nice touch on short routes. Has good timing on his passes. Shows good mechanics, a smooth delivery and can get into a rhythm. Best suited for a spread offense. **Grade: 7.6**
Field vision: Makes some mind-boggling decisions at times, especially for the son of a former NFL quarterback. Has struggled to beat the blitz and forces passes under pressure. Throws too many balls up for grabs. Doesn't consistently look off safeties and too often locks onto his primary receiver. **Grade: 6.8**
Running ability: Lacks speed and isn't a threat to take off and run. Lacks a great feel for the pocket and doesn't buy many second chances with his feet. **Grade: 6.5**
Intangibles: There's much to like about him. Has handled much adversity the past two seasons. Biggest concern is his history of poor play in big-game situations. **Grade: 7.0**
Bottom line: Simms has the size, arm strength and accuracy to be an NFL starter, but something is missing. Physically, he is a first-round prospect, but he has yet to develop the mental toughness and leadership skills to match his natural abilities.
FINAL GRADE: 7.2

7. Ken Dorsey, Miami (Fla.)

6-4 208 4.80 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Trent Dilfer, Seahawks
Strengths: Is an intelligent, lead-by-example, pocket passer. Has complete control over the huddle and wins the respect of teammates. Shows adequate footwork and a quick set. Buys second chances in the pocket. Has a quick release and above-average accuracy. Throws a catchable short-to-intermediate ball.
Weaknesses: Was on the lean side but added some weight since the end of the season. Lacks ideal NFL arm strength. Has trouble putting zip on throws to the perimeter. Hasn't held up as well under pressure. Still throws too many balls up for grabs when hurried.
Bottom line: Dorsey was very accomplished in college; Miami lost two games during his three-plus seasons as starter. He added bulk and strength each of the past three seasons but is undersized and lacks the arm to make some necessary NFL throws. A team might take a chance on him in the third round, but it's more likely he will slip to the fourth.
FINAL GRADE: 5.8

8. Kliff Kingsbury, Texas Tech

6-3⅜ 206 4.70 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Shane Matthews, Redskins
Strengths: Is a timing passer who has a great feel for the game. Hits receivers in stride consistently on short routes. Excels at reading defenses and going through progressions. Makes quick decisions and finds hot receivers vs. blitzes. Buys second chances with his good speed and quick feet.
Weaknesses: Must bulk up and get stronger. Struggles to make throws to the perimeter and down the field. Has most trouble with deep accuracy. Has nice touch but tends to be less consistent deep than with short-to-intermediate routes. Isn't much of a running threat.
Bottom line: Texas Tech's wide-open offense accentuated Kingsbury's strengths: quick decision-making, accuracy and timing. But he lacks the ideal size and arm strength for the NFL. His struggles at the Senior Bowl caused his value to drop. He should be one of the top 10 quarterbacks drafted, but not until the second day. **FINAL GRADE: 5.3**

Chris Simms

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

9. Seneca Wallace, Iowa State

5-10⅞ 190 4.51 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Doug Flutie, Chargers
Strengths: Has great quickness, speed and athleticism. Is a big threat to run. Excels at sensing pressure. Has good pocket awareness, the quickness to sidestep traffic and the speed and skills to take off downfield. Throws well on the run. Has a strong arm with above-average accuracy. Has a consistent deep arm. Is tough for his size. Can take a hit when delivering the ball. Is competitive and a good leader. Offers great intangibles.
Weaknesses: Lack of size is biggest concern. Has trouble seeing the field from the pocket. Has too many passes batted down. Tends to break from the pocket too early. Hasn't consistently shown he can sit in the pocket, read a defense and find secondary receivers.
Bottom line: Wallace lacks the size of an NFL quarterback and has trouble making reads and finding windows. He has worked out at wide receiver and could be a productive backup quarterback. He could be a short-yardage runner, kick returner and a contributor on coverage teams. **FINAL GRADE: 5.2**

10. Brad Banks, Iowa

6-0½ 185 4.65 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Ray Lucas, Dolphins
Strengths: Has quick footwork and good straight-line speed. Is somewhat elusive in the open field. Has a terrific pocket presence. Avoids the rush well and buys second chances. Throws a strong deep ball and has adequate zip on deep outs. Throws well on the run. Is a good leader and playmaker.
Weaknesses: Has marginal height, bulk and lower-body strength. Misses too many open receivers. Has trouble throwing intermediate timing routes. Throws poorly to spots. Isn't as effective when he's in the pocket as when he's rolling out. Is mediocre at reading defenses.
Bottom line: Banks has adequate arm strength, excellent mobility, a big-play knack and good leadership skills. But he is undersized and too erratic as a passer. He may never be more than an emergency quarterback and special teams contributor. **FINAL GRADE: 4.5**

11. Brian St. Pierre, Boston College

6-2⅝ 218 4.72 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Alex Van Pelt, Bills
Strengths: Throws a catchable ball. Has a good feel for leading receivers. Throws well on the run. Has improved his consistency and ability to read defenses. Can step up and take a hit when delivering.
Weaknesses: Tends to make most of his mistakes under pressure. Throws too many balls up for grabs. Has some trouble with deep outs. Gets out of his rhythm at times and misses his target too often. Has his most trouble on intermediate timing routes.
Bottom line: St. Pierre lacks a big arm and will struggle to make some NFL throws. He can get into a rhythm and be accurate with good control, but other times he makes mistakes, gets into a funk and loses the strike zone. He may lack the upside and consistency to be a starter. **FINAL GRADE: 4.2**

12. Jason Gesser, Washington State

6-0⅝ 180 4.85 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Koy Detmer, Eagles
Strengths: Is an accurate, efficient passer. Has a quick release and sees the whole field well. Makes sound pre-snap reads. Shows good timing and touch on short routes. Consistently finds hot receivers and beat blitzes.
Weaknesses: Lacks NFL measurables. Has trouble finding throwing windows. Lacks bulk and strength. Would be a constant durability concern in the NFL. Lacks a great arm. Won't be able to make some intermediate-to-deep throws vs. NFL defenders.
Bottom line: Gesser is an accurate passer, tough player and a proven leader, but he is

SPOTLIGHT

Byron Leftwich, Marshall

Marshall standout Chad Pennington has blossomed into a terrific quarterback for the Jets, but his understudy at Huntington, W.Va., might have the talent to surpass him.

Scouts rave about the physical gifts of Byron Leftwich, a three-year starter for the Thundering Herd who is projected as a top five overall pick (Pennington was chosen No. 18 overall in 2000).

Leftwich's size (6-5⅝, 252), accuracy and arm strength attract attention, but Marshall coach Bob Pruett praises Leftwich's toughness.

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Leftwich played late last season with a hairline fracture in his lower left leg that caused him to limp noticeably. His refusal to leave the game in a loss to Akron produced one of the season's lasting images; his offensive linemen at times needed to carry their leader to the huddle.

"A lot of guys in his situation, if they had gotten hurt, they would've sat down and let the draft take place," Pruett says. "He kept competing. He wanted to win a (conference) championship, and he wanted to be with his family, which is his teammates. He's just been awesome."

On essentially one leg, Leftwich helped Marshall defeat Toledo for the Mid-American Conference title. He also led his team past Louisville in the GMAC Bowl for the Herd's fifth consecutive bowl win.

Leftwich's talent has made a believer out of one AFC scouting director who still cautions that Leftwich, like Pennington, might need time to develop.

"The biggest hurdle that I see that he'll have to overcome is … getting used to playing against the speed of the game at the pro level," the director says. "Not taking anything away from Marshall, but they're not playing the top Division I competition, so he's got a little bigger jump as far as the speed of the game is concerned."

Though Pennington benefited from his two-year grace period on the sideline, the team that drafts Leftwich might need him to start immediately. Pruett says Leftwich's outstanding leadership and football IQ will allow him to take control right away if need be.

"Byron is capable of handling any position he's put into," Pruett says. "All I know is that they better get ready for the big guy to start firing bullets … because he's certainly great at it." —*Roger Kuznia*

nothing more than a second-day prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 4.0**

13. Tony Romo, Eastern Illinois

6-1⅞ 224 4.90 6th round

NFL comparison: Charlie Batch, Steelers

Strengths: Has an above-average arm. Shows decent zip on deep outs. Has a quick release. Has enough arm strength to drive the ball downfield. Reads coverages well and makes sound decisions.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal height and speed. Has some trouble finding throwing windows and will struggle to see over NFL linemen. Division I-AA background is a concern.

Bottom line: Romo is risky to draft because of his small-school status, but he has enough upside and developmental skills for a team to take a chance on him late. **FINAL GRADE: 3.4**

14. Juston Wood, Portland State

6-0⅜ 203 4.79 6th round

NFL comparison: Anthony Wright

Strengths: Has a quick release and is an accurate short-area passer. Shows good zip on deep outs and throws a strong deep ball. Shows good timing on his throws.

Weaknesses: Lack of size is a big concern. Has some trouble finding throwing windows. Takes off and runs too early at times and doesn't look as comfortable throwing from the pocket as he does outside of it.

Bottom line: Wood showed he is quick enough and has a strong enough arm to deserve a late-round chance with his solid week of practice at the East-West Shrine game. **FINAL GRADE: 3.1**

15. Bret Engemann, Brigham Young*

6-3⅝ 233 4.90 7th round

NFL comparison: Chris Redman, Ravens

Strengths: Is a tall pocket passer. Shows above-average zip on deep outs. Has a strong downfield arm. Lacks elite arm strength but can make most necessary throws. Shows adequate accuracy when he has time to set up and room to step into throws.

Weaknesses: Missed 2000 season and parts of this past season. Showed flashes of finding secondary reads, but he struggles to read defenses consistently and see the entire field. Forces throws into coverage when rushed.

Bottom line: Though he never has been able to stay healthy, he still has more potential than many other late-round quarterback prospects, which is why he might be worth drafting for a team that is willing to work patiently to reestablish his confidence. **FINAL GRADE: 2.5**

16. Curt Anes, Grand Valley State

6-0½ 221 4.90 7th round

NFL comparison: Tim Rattay, 49ers

Strengths: Is an accurate, efficient passer. Shows a quick release and sound mechanics. Does well at making pre-snap reads and going through his progressions. Is at his best in the short-to-intermediate game.

Weaknesses: Lacks great size. Will have more trouble finding passing windows in the NFL. Division II background is a concern. Lacks an ideal downfield arm and zip on deep outs. Is not a running threat.

Bottom line: Anes won't be able to sit back in the pocket and pick NFL defenses apart by throwing downfield, but he also won't make many mistakes and seems like a natural fit for a West Coast offense. His performance at the Gridiron Classic helped answer some doubts. **FINAL GRADE: 2.4**

17. Casey Printers, Florida A&M

6-2 200 4.60 7th round

NFL comparison: Shaun King

Strengths: Shows a strong downfield arm. Can step up in the pocket and take hits. Has a good feel for pressure.

Weaknesses: Has been inconsistent. His accuracy isn't great, and he tends to lose his control when under pressure. Hasn't shown he consistently can beat blitzes.

Bottom line: Printers was a starter at TCU before transferring for his senior season. He was decent at the I-AA level when healthy, but he never dominated. He could draw some attention in the last round or as a free agent because of his physical skills and productivity against I-A competition before his transfer. **FINAL GRADE: 2.2**

18. Brooks Bollinger, Wisconsin

6-0½ 204 4.75 7th round

NFL comparison: Jake Delhomme, Saints

Strengths: Is a good athlete. Has good game experience and has improved as a passer each season. Shows good touch on deep balls. Controls his velocity well on short throws and has improved his ability to hit receivers in stride. Is a decent running threat.

Weaknesses: Durability is a concern. Is undersized and lacks bulk. Has marginal arm strength. Shows poor mechanics. Lacks great timing. Is inconsistent with his coverage reads.

Bottom line: A tough leader and great competitor, Bollinger is a marginal NFL prospect. He has below-average arm strength and his accuracy is erratic. He might not be drafted. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 19. Jason Thomas, UNLV, 6-3⅝, 241, 4.77 (40 time); **20.** Marquel Blackwell, South Florida, 5-11, 207, 4.70; **21.** Josh Blankenship, Eastern Washington, 6-2, 210, 5.00; **22.** Nate Hybl, Oklahoma, 6-4, 220, 4.90; **23.** Daniel Cobb, Auburn, 6-3½, 224, 4.90; **24.** D. Bryant, Duke, 6-2, 221, 4.85; **25.** Gibran Hamdan, Indiana, 6-2, 210, 5.00; **26.** Tom Arth, John Carroll, 6-3⅛, 232, 4.77; **27.** Ryan McCann, Chattanooga, 6-3, 215, 4.50; **28.** Jose Fuentes, Utah State, 6-2½, 214, 4.74; **29.** Marc Dunn, Kansas State, 6-2½, 203, 4.85; **30.** Tyler Watts, Alabama, 6-2¼, 216, 4.89; **31.** Grant Noel, Virginia Tech, 6-1¼, 221, 4.73; **32.** Jason Johnson, Arizona, 6-1¾, 212, 4.95.

Running backs

This group suffered a huge blow when Miami's Willis McGahee suffered two torn ligaments in his left knee against Ohio State in the national championship game. McGahee had been projected as a top-five pick and likely would have been selected No. 3 overall by the Texans. Now, despite successful surgery, he's a third-round gamble.

Larry Johnson and Lee Suggs are considered possible first-round backs, but neither is a sure-fire prospect. Johnson rushed for 2,015 yards as a senior after splitting carries the previous two seasons. Though he is a powerful and patient runner and has better-than-average hands, he lacks elusiveness and top-end speed. Suggs is a gifted inside runner, and though he has better explosiveness than Johnson, teams will be wary of using a first-round pick on a back who had reconstructive knee surgery less than two years ago.

2002 DRAFT

Running backs taken 18	
Round 1	2
Round 2	4
Round 3	2
Round 4	2
Round 5	0
Round 6	5
Round 7	3

Onterrio Smith is undersized, but he's the fastest back in this class. Chris Brown has had problems with durability and fumbling, but he is explosive and powerful enough to carry the load in the NFL. Musa Smith lacks top-end speed but could be the next in a line of productive NFL backs from Georgia who were drafted after the first round. There are concerns about Cecil Sapp coming from an option offense, but he's a powerful runner and has a second gear in the open field. Justin Fargas proved in the last month of the season and at the Senior Bowl that he might be the best all-around back in the class when healthy.

The sleeper could be Middle Tennessee's Dwone Hicks, who was hyped as a Heisman Trophy candidate in the preseason but missed two games with a knee injury and never was the same. He's healthy and could be a steal between the fourth and sixth rounds.

Justin Fargas

TOM HAUCK FOR TSN

***Denotes underclassman**

1. Larry Johnson, Penn State

6-0½ 221 4.50 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Eddie George, Titans

Inside running: Shows adequate burst to the hole. Has great size and strength. Is a powerful, pick-and-slide runner. Breaks tackles and picks up plenty of yards after contact when running at a good pad level. Runs too high at times and takes many hits. Lacks great change-of-direction skills but is patient and has good vision. Consistently finds cutback lanes and shows good initial burst off cuts. **Grade: 8.7**

Outside running: Has good burst and decent speed for his size. Is a load to bring down. Isn't very elusive and lacks a second gear in the open field. Doesn't show the pure speed to consistently turn the corner in the NFL. More of an inside-out back who does his best work between the tackles. **Grade: 7.2**

Blocking: A solid blocker with good size and power at the point of attack. Understands assignments well. Lacks great lateral movement and occasionally is a step late to get into blitz pickup position. Has the physical skills to keep improving in this area. **Grade: 8.0**

Hands/routes: Is an underrated receiver. Has soft hands and catches well on the run. Doesn't create many matchup problems but is tough to tackle in space. Is a solid short-yardage option. **Grade: 8.2**

Durability: Carried a heavy load only as a senior. Has no major injuries in his past. One concern is that he takes too many shots to the body. **Grade: 8.5**

Bottom line: Johnson has good size, vision, patience and power. He also has some value as a kickoff returner. There are concerns about his running style and lack of top-end speed. As the best all-around running back in this class, he should be the first selected.

FINAL GRADE: 8.1

2. Lee Suggs, Virginia Tech

5-11⅜ 201 4.45 2nd round

NFL comparison: Curtis Martin, Jets

Inside running: Is undersized. Doesn't push the pile in short yardage but has excellent vision, patience, a good initial burst and change-of-direction ability. Is a tough runner and shifty. Consistently finds cutback lanes. Picks up good yards after contact. Runs low to the ground and delivers blows. Excels at finding

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-1	225	4.40
NFL minimum	5-8	190	4.65

Marshall Faulk has revolutionized the position to the point that big power backs and third-down backs are endangered species. Today's premier running back must have vision to find the hole, explosiveness to get through it and patience to allow blocks to develop. He must have reliable hands, run sharp pass routes and pick up blitzing linebackers. Teams want an effective runner between the tackles who also creates mismatches in the passing game.

ON THE RISE: Justin Fargas, USC
Finally healthy in the second half of the season and for the Senior Bowl, he flashed the skills of an all-around threat.

ON THE DECLINE: Dahrran Diedrick, Nebraska
It's hard to ignore his drop-off in production as a senior and the fact he is an option back.

SLEEPER: Dwone Hicks, Middle Tennessee
A minor knee injury slowed him as a senior, and now he has become a forgotten man.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Derek Watson, S.C. State
Not since Nebraska's Lawrence Phillips have we seen a talented back with so many off-field issues.

BIGGEST RISK: Willis McGahee, Miami (Fla.)
A devastating knee injury in the Fiesta Bowl lowered his stock, but he potentially could have the biggest reward.

BEST INSIDE RUNNER: Larry Johnson, Penn State
A classic Big 10, pound-it-between-the-tackles runner with just enough burst and speed to be dangerous.

BEST OPEN-FIELD RUNNER: Onterrio Smith, Oregon
If he adds bulk and stays healthy, he has a chance to be a home run threat in the NFL because of his speed.

MOST FUMBLE PRONE: Chris Brown, Colorado
Although he was productive the past two years, his upright running style leads to a lot of nicks and fumbles.

TOP RECEIVER: Nick Maddox, Florida State
He spent a lot of time playing in the slot the past two years and caught 49 passes.

TOP BLOCKER: Artose Pinner, Kentucky
Playing in a pass-oriented offense made him an excellent blocker and a better-than-average receiver.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

the crease between the tackles and shows good burst through the hole. Can break outside and has a second gear in the open field. **Grade: 8.5**
Outside running: Looks indecisive at times on sweeps and outside zone plays. Is more productive as an inside-out runner. Is a big-play threat since regaining most of his speed after a 2001 knee injury. Isn't very elusive in the open field but makes many first tacklers miss because of burst and change of direction. **Grade: 8.1**
Blocking: Is an adequate pass blocker. Lacks great size. Gets overmatched by bigger linebackers at the point of attack. Moves well laterally. Slides well in blitz pickup. Gets in good position, maintains solid leverage and shows adequate pop. **Grade: 7.8**
Hands/routes: Has soft hands. Can catch on the run and away from his body. Speed helps as a receiver. Lacks experience. Must work on his route running. **Grade: 7.8**
Durability: Is a huge concern. Had reconstructive knee surgery two years ago. There are questions about his ability to carry a full-time load. **Grade: 7.0**
Bottom line: Suggs is one of the top two backs in this class, despite missing most of the 2001 season. He isn't as explosive as he was before his injury, but he got stronger as his senior season progressed. He lacks savvy as a receiver, but he is an explosive runner with good inside running skills. If healthy, he can be a sure-handed feature back.
FINAL GRADE: 7.9

3. Onterrio Smith, Oregon*

NFL comparison: Tiki Barber, Giants
5-11 205 4.48 2nd round
Inside running: Lacks ideal size but runs big and is slippery inside. Stays low to the ground, maintaining good pad level. Has terrific change-of-direction skills, and picks the hole and slides into it without losing much momentum. Has above-average vision and good burst to the hole and shows patience. Doesn't break many tackles and won't overpower many defenders. **Grade: 7.7**
Outside running: Might be the fastest back in this class. Has the speed to consistently turn the corner. Is a threat to go the distance with every touch. Shows great open-field acceleration. Is elusive and fluid. Makes defenders miss. **Grade: 8.1**
Blocking: Shows a good feel for assignments. Shuffles well laterally and gets in position to pick up blitzes. Has good footwork. Is at his best when he chips blitzers outside. Lacks the size, power and lower-body strength to hold his ground against powerful rushes. Is much more effective off play-action and as a receiver than as an extra blocker. **Grade: 7.0**
Hands/routes: Is quite effective on play fakes. A daunting open-field receiver who has the speed and quickness to run routes out of the slot. Lacks experience here but has terrific upside. **Grade: 7.8**
Durability: The biggest area of concern. Runs with a low center of gravity and protects his body but is undersized and has had problems staying healthy. Missed three games because of a knee injury in 2002 and has had shoulder troubles. **Grade: 7.0**
Bottom line: Smith needed to leave Tennessee for Oregon because of off-field problems and a lack of commitment. Assuming he can answer the intangible and injury questions, he is a solid first-day pick with big-play potential. He runs more like he's 225 than 205. Smith has breakaway speed and would be a great fit in a spread offense. He also is a proven kickoff returner. **FINAL GRADE: 7.5**

4. Chris Brown, Colorado*

6-2 225 4.55 2nd round
NFL comparison: James Stewart, Lions
Inside running: Big and strong with good vision. Shows patience and great body control and excels at finding cutback lanes. Changes directions smoothly. Picks holes effectively and slides inside. Has a second gear once he breaks through the line. A tough runner who gains good yards after initial contact. Biggest concern is his upright style. Takes many shots to the body. Has had trouble holding on to the ball and staying healthy. Lacks great initial burst, which could be a problem in the NFL. **Grade: 8.4**

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Outside running: Is a long strider with better speed than it seems, but it takes him awhile to get going, which is why he is only average in this facet. Is decisive and does well at squaring his shoulders to the hole and getting upfield on sweeps and zone plays. When outside and in the open field, he shows good power and gains speed as he goes. Is at his best when running downhill, however, and lacks the initial burst/speed to consistently turn the corner in the NFL. **Grade: 6.8**
Blocking: Lacks experience in pass protection. Has good size and strength but doesn't get great leverage or show a lot of confidence in his blocking. Absorbs too much contact. Lacks great technique. Often seems to be off-balance and needs to lunge. Needs more experience and coaching in this area. **Grade: 7.0**
Hands/routes: Flashes good receiving skills but is inexperienced. Has soft hands and long arms. Can catch on the run and away from his body. Because of size/speed combination, he works well with the ball in the open field. Lacks route-running savvy and must work on reading defenses and understanding his outlet role. **Grade: 6.7**
Durability: Had much trouble staying healthy last season, his first as a premier back. Missed the final game of the regular season and the Big 12 championship game with a bruised sternum. He also missed most of the second half of the Alamo Bowl because of a minor concussion. Because of his upright style, he absorbs too many big hits. **Grade: 7.0**
Bottom line: Brown, a fourth-year junior, is a big, strong, powerful runner with good vision and cutback skills. He gains good yards after contact, gets stronger with more

SPOTLIGHT

Larry Johnson
Penn State

There's no denying the tradition of great running backs at Penn State. And there's no denying that Penn State assistant coach Larry Johnson Sr. had a special close-up opportunity to watch the latest in a long line of greats.

His son, Larry Johnson Jr., rewrote the Nittany Lions' record book last season by rushing for 2,087 yards on 271 attempts. After becoming the ninth back in NCAA Division I history to reach the 2,000 mark in a season, he finished third in the balloting for the Heisman Trophy.

But Johnson Sr. says it's a testament to Johnson Jr.'s determination that he stuck with the program before finally emerging as a senior. In his first three college seasons, Johnson Jr. combined for 866 rushing yards.

"Larry just waited for his turn in the rotation," Johnson Sr. says. "All the while, he was getting stronger, showing better speed and balance."

Johnson Sr., who works with the Nittany Lions' defensive line, had firsthand knowledge of how much burst his son developed. "When he made contact with one of our guys at the line of scrimmage, they fell backward."

The Johnson family has a major presence on campus. Younger sister Teresa plays softball for Penn State and younger brother Tony is a PSU wide receiver. Johnson Sr. says the family football connection provided an important backbone for Johnson Jr.

"It was a good support system for Larry to have. He can be too critical of himself, and that kept him afloat through the tougher times," Johnson Sr. says.

His combination of fighting spirit and patience played a big part in Johnson eventually producing prolific results. "Through his maturation, Larry remained a fierce competitor," Johnson Sr. says. "When he can taper that fire and channel it on the field, it's hard to deny him."

There are concerns Johnson (6-0½, 221) might run "too high" or "straight-line" for the NFL. But one scout for an AFC team who observed Johnson at the Senior Bowl says there is plenty to like about him.

"He is very patient and has great vision," the scout says. "He doesn't seem to have much elusiveness at first, but he catches you with his change of direction."

Another AFC scout was impressed with how well Johnson worked with NFL coaches during Senior Bowl practices. "He is a strong runner who quickly adapts to what he sees," the scout says. "I see a very bright future for him." —*Vinnie Iyer*

SPOTLIGHT Lee Suggs, Virginia Tech

Think of the way a person would crave a bite of steak near the end of a 24-hour fast. Or the way someone with claustrophobia would yearn for a breath of fresh air after sitting in coach during a four-hour plane ride. That's the kind of zeal, the type of unadulterated desire Lee Suggs carries with him when the goal line is steps away. Scoring touchdowns is his passion, his purpose.

"It's just a different mind-set," Suggs says. "Everybody's coming at you hard, and the field gets small. You just want those six points because that's why you're playing the game."

Virginia Tech running backs coach Billy Hite says Suggs is better at finding cracks in short-yardage situations than anyone he has coached in 25 years. "He always is in the right hole," Hite says. "He has great power, and he carries his pads low. He can just smell the goal line."

Suggs can do more than smell it. He crossed the goal line a Virginia Tech-record 32 times *before* tearing an ACL in the first game of the 2001 season. Suggs returned in 2002 to score 24 more times, and he ended his career with touchdowns in 27 straight games, an NCAA record.

"The No. 1 thing that stands out about him is his production," says an NFL college scouting director. "Lee Suggs has a knack for scoring touchdowns."

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Suggs, though, shouldn't be thought of as a short-yardage specialist, a college version of Zack Crockett or Moe Williams. Hite says Suggs' speed is his top asset.

Suggs loves Marshall Faulk because of his elusiveness and Eddie George because of his power. He likes to think of himself as Faulk-George hybrid. "I think he can be an all-down back, someone you really feel good about handing the ball to 20 to 25 times a game," the scouting director says. "I think he can be a starter in our league."

Even though Suggs ran for 1,329 yards as a senior, he reached 25 carries in a game only twice. That's because he shared the tailback job with Kevin Jones, another future star.

"By having Lee share time with Kevin, I may have kept Lee from being a Heisman candidate," Hite says. "But that's not what's most important. I'd rather keep him healthy and give him an opportunity to go to the next level."

Suggs will get that opportunity. He is being mentioned with Colorado's Chris Brown and Penn State's Larry Johnson as the best backs available in the draft.

Score another one for Suggs. —*Kyle Veltrop*

carries and shows an extra gear in the open field. But he likely will slip to the middle-to-late second round because of concerns about his durability, straight-up style, fumbling problems and pass-catching inexperience. **FINAL GRADE: 7.2**

5. Musa Smith, Georgia*

6-1 225 4.55 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Michael Pittman, Buccaneers

Strengths: Is a pick-and-slide runner. Has good inside-running skills. Shows good initial burst out of his stance and gets to the line quickly. Finds the cutback lanes. Does well at stopping and starting before reaching the line. Has good size. Shows good body lean. Is tough to tackle in the open field because he runs hard with leverage. Has good body control. Changes directions without losing much momentum. Is an average pass blocker. Adjusts to pick up blitzers. Has good size and maintains leverage at the point of attack.

Weaknesses: Has adequate straight-line speed but not much of a second gear. Isn't nearly as productive running outside as inside. Can't consistently turn the corner. Isn't elusive in the open field and isn't much of a big-play threat. Runs with a good center of gravity and has good power but doesn't push the pile. Has so-so hands. Does catch balls thrown within his frame, especially when facing the quarterback. Isn't a great route runner and doesn't consistently catch passes on the run or away from his body. Has short arms and struggles when he must reach for the ball. Durability is a concern. Hasn't sustained any serious injuries but is constantly banged up.

Bottom line: After staying healthy for an entire season and knowing the Bulldogs' top six linemen were not returning, he was wise to leave Georgia after his junior year. He has many intriguing physical skills, including good size, adequate speed and above-average power. There are concerns about his durability and lack of elusiveness, but Smith has the potential to develop into an every-down back. **FINAL GRADE: 6.5**

6. Cecil Sapp, Colorado State

5-10⅜ 226 4.55 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Stephen Davis

Strengths: Has an impressive combination of size and burst. Has adequate speed and shows good quickness to the hole. Runs with good power and lowers his shoulders at the point of attack. Has good body lean and finishes well. Runs tough and can carry the load. Excels at wearing down defenses with his powerful style. Improved his pass-blocking skills as a senior and has potential in that area.

Weaknesses: Durability is a big concern. A broken leg bone led to a benign tumor in his heel last year. Despite good speed, he isn't much of a big-play threat. Doesn't consistently turn the corner and isn't very elusive in the open field. Has some trouble catching the ball on the run, and route-running skills need work.

Bottom line: Sapp looked stronger and more quick than ever as a senior after the tumor in his heel was removed. He won't be a big-play threat in the NFL and offers little as a receiver, but he has enough burst and quickness to develop into a starter if he continues to improve as a pass blocker. **FINAL GRADE: 6.4**

7. Willis McGahee, Miami (Fla.)*

6-1 220 4.48 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Fred Taylor, Jaguars

Strengths: When healthy, he has an ideal combination of speed and power. Shows excellent burst to the hole. Has vision and patience. Finds cutback lanes and shows great stop-and-start ability. Has an explosive second gear once he breaks through the line. Is a threat to score every time he gets to the linebacker level. Was fastest back in this class before his severe knee injury in the Fiesta Bowl. Can consistently turn the corner. Is decisive to the outside; picks his crease when running laterally. Has terrific open-field acceleration. Is inexperienced as a receiver but has potential in that area.

Weaknesses: Health is the biggest concern after tearing his ACL and MCL. Also missed four games in 2001 with a knee injury. Runs high and takes many shots to his body. Must show improved leg drive and run with better leverage and pad level. Needs to improve his blocking skills. Has good size and can slide to pick up blitzes, but his technique is marginal and he isn't aggressive enough. Dexterity is improving, but he still has trouble catching away from his body. Route running is below average.

Bottom line: McGahee, a redshirt sophomore, was a lock to be a top-10 pick before his injuries, but his value is tough to gauge now. He has good size and can add bulk and strength. When healthy, he is a tough runner with excellent vision and change-of-direction skills and an explosive second gear. McGahee has room to improve as a blocker and receiver but has great upside. Doctors say he has a chance to play this season, but he shouldn't be counted on until 2004. **FINAL GRADE: 6.1**

8. Justin Fargas, USC

6-0⅛ 219 4.36 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Deuce McAllister, Saints

Strengths: Has good size and power. Is a

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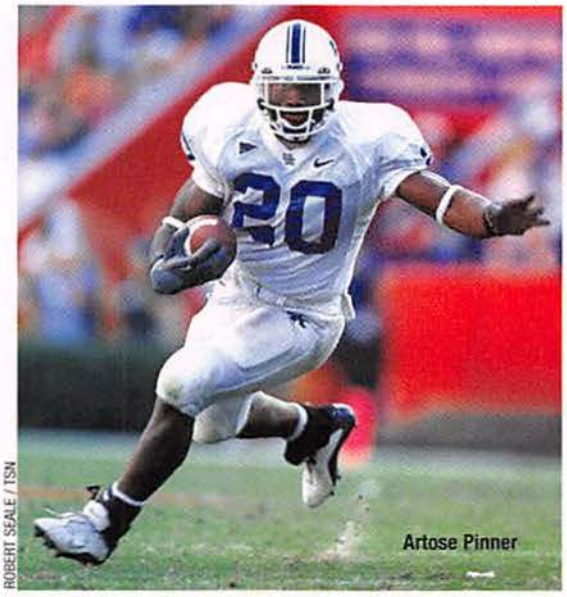
tough runner with great speed. Can consistently turn the corner. Is a slasher. Has patience and good vision. Finds cutback lanes well and has great burst out of his cuts. Picks up yards after contact. Lowers his shoulders and delivers blows. Shows an extra gear in the open field. Is a strong blocker. Can catch on the run and is a big-play threat.
Weakness: Had a roller-coaster college career, including injuries and a transfer. Durability is a big concern. Doubts linger about his ability to carry the load. Has limited experience. Is still raw, especially in the passing game. Must improve blocking recognition, route-running skills and awareness.
Bottom line: Fargas found his footing at USC after battling a leg injury and transferring from Michigan. He was one of the nation's most explosive backs in the second half of last season. Shows a terrific combination of power, burst, speed and body control. Has limited experience as a receiver but showcased his hands at the Senior Bowl. He can be productive after the catch and pose matchup problems. Fargas is a risky pick but has as much upside as any back in this class.
FINAL GRADE: 6.0

9. Artose Pinner, Kentucky

NFL comparison: Antowain Smith, Patriots
5-9½ 229 4.68 **4th round**
Strengths: Is a well-built, straight-line power back with some burst. Has a good center of gravity. Has bulk and power. Runs low to the ground. Keeps a good pad level and consistently delivers blows. Keeps legs driving and picks up good yards after contact. Has good stamina and toughness. Shows adequate quickness to the hole and some open-field burst. Has reliable hands. Is hard to tackle. Is a tough and consistent pass blocker.
Weaknesses: Lacks speed, quickness and elusiveness. Will struggle to turn the corner in the NFL, where his lack of top-end speed will be more noticeable. Doesn't make many defenders miss. Can't stop and start quickly and has some trouble making quick cuts to open lanes.
Bottom line: Pinner is neither fast nor elusive, but he is a powerful north/south runner who seems to get stronger as games progress. He picks up tough yards and can wear down defenses. He is an underrated receiver and a reliable pass blocker. His lack of speed is the biggest concern regarding his potential.
FINAL GRADE: 5.5

10. LaBrandon Toefield, LSU*

6-0 225 4.60 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Marcel Shipp, Cardinals
Strengths: Is at his best between the tackles. Has good size and above-average power. Is patient. Waits for holes to develop and shows decent initial burst. Runs with an adequate pad level and drives his legs. Shows good body lean. Has more quickness than pure speed. Has nice change-of-direction skills and consistently finds cutback lanes. Is a consistent, sound and efficient pass blocker. Shows good hands on short routes. Catches most throws within his frame. Catches well on the run, especially on swing and circle routes.
Weaknesses: Durability is a big concern. Tore left ACL in 2001 SEC title game. Missed four games in 2002 because of a broken forearm. Has decent speed but won't consistently turn the corner. Is hesitant on sweeps and outside zone plays. Is much more comfortable running north/south. Lacks open-field elusiveness and big-play ability. Isn't much of a receiving threat. Lacks the speed to split out wide. Looks uncomfortable trying to run downfield and make catches.
Bottom line: Toefield was a top prospect before his knee injury but hasn't been as explosive since his return. He still has some upside. He is a productive inside runner with good size, body control, change of direction and burst. He also is adequate in the passing game. He never had great speed, even at 100 percent. **FINAL GRADE: 5.2**


ROBERT SEALE / TSN
Artose Pinner

11. Santonio Beard, Alabama*

6-0 215 4.53 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Olandis Gary, Broncos
Strengths: Has good size and is powerful when he lowers his shoulders. Has great initial quickness and burst to the hole. Has above-average straight-line speed and shows a second gear in the open field. Is at his best when working inside-out. Shows the burst to break a run outside once through the hole. Is inexperienced as a pass blocker but has the size and potential to be effective in that area.
Weaknesses: Lacks some patience. Frequently runs on the heels of linemen. Doesn't pick and slide into the hole well. Will struggle to consistently turn the corner in the NFL. Must improve his pass-blocking techniques. Has trouble picking up blitzing linebackers and tends to lunge. Is inexperienced as a receiver. Makes catches on the run but has short arms and struggles to catch passes away from his body. Is raw as a route runner. Durability is a concern; has had shoulder and knee injuries.
Bottom line: Beard started last season as No. 3 on Alabama's depth chart, but he quickly emerged as a feature back who proved he could carry a load. With time, he could develop into a full-time NFL back. He's still raw and must improve his vision, patience and passing-game skills.
FINAL GRADE: 4.8

12. Earnest Graham, Florida

5-8¾ 217 4.50 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Moe Williams, Vikings
Strengths: Has a low center of gravity and runs with good leverage. Has good body lean, control and initial pop. Lowers his shoulders and drives his legs after contact. Has good burst to the hole. Shows vision and patience. Changes directions well and finds cutback lanes. Is tough and productive inside. Has good hands. Can catch on the run and gets upfield immediately after the catch. Is an experienced, consistent and tough pass blocker.
Weaknesses: Durability is a big concern. Has struggled with nagging ankle, foot and knee injuries throughout his career. Lack of size, top-end speed and elusiveness will limit him in the NFL. Is a subpar outside runner. Won't make many defenders miss in the open field. Doesn't show much of a second gear. Lacks height and bulk and won't push the pile in short-yardage situations.
Bottom line: In 2002, Graham was set to carry the load for the first time after sharing snaps the previous two seasons, but he missed parts of several games with nagging injuries. He still has adequate experience, however. His competitiveness is appealing, but he may never be more than a serviceable NFL backup.
FINAL GRADE: 4.7

13. Domanick Davis, LSU

5-9 213 4.75 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Kevin Faulk, Patriots
Strengths: Is shifty and runs low to the ground. Has great center of gravity. Has smooth hips and is elusive in the open field. Is a strong outside runner with decent speed. Has great initial quickness and can stop and start without losing much speed. Has excellent hands and is an experienced receiver. Excels at catching ball on the run and runs routes smoothly. Has much upside as a kick-off returner.
Weaknesses: Lacks size. Isn't a strong inside runner; lacks both the vision and the size to take a constant beating. Not as effective in

traffic. Tends to hesitate when running between the tackles and doesn't pick up many yards after contact. Is a below-average blocker and somewhat of a finesse player. Lacks ideal pop and lower-body strength.
Bottom line: Davis took advantage of LaBrandon Toefield's inability to stay healthy last season. Davis is undersized but is quick and has good speed. Despite his size, he has proved he can handle a full load. Even when he split carries with Toefield, Davis was the more explosive and productive back. Davis' versatility—his potential as a third-down back and return man—makes him a good mid-round prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 4.5**

14. Dwone Hicks, Middle Tennessee

5-10 215 4.65 5th round
NFL comparison: Lamar Smith, Panthers
Strengths: Is a squatty runner. Excels at staying low to the ground. Runs with great leverage and good power. Has good burst to the hole. Also shows vision and patience. Has good body control and change-of-direction skills. Can pick up cutback lanes. Lowers his shoulders, delivers blows and picks up yards after contact. Isn't speedy but still shows a second gear in the open field. Has fluid hips and can make defenders miss. Hands are much improved. Has developed into a consistent receiver. Catches well on the run.
Weaknesses: Suffered a minor knee injury as a senior and was not as explosive afterward. Lacks great speed. Doubts linger about ability to turn the corner in the NFL. Benefited from running in a spread offense against marginal competition. Lacks height and doesn't have much more room to add bulk. Is an inconsistent blocker and will have trouble matching up against bigger linebackers. Used his body to make catches early in his career. Isn't smooth at running routes.
Bottom line: Hicks posted great numbers as a small-conference Division I back, but the knee injury in 2002 slowed him down significantly. When healthy, Hicks has a nice combination of burst and power. He also is a serviceable short-yardage receiver. The biggest concerns are his limited elusiveness, lack of top-end speed and inconsistent pass blocking. Hicks' value will decline as the draft nears because his speed won't transfer to the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 4.2**

15. Kerry Carter, Stanford

6-2 235 4.65 5th round
NFL comparison: Anthony Thomas, Bears
Strengths: Is a big, strong back with some power. Breaks a lot of arm tackles. Stays low and picks up yards after contact. Has nice burst to the hole. Isn't a huge load but runs hard and is tough to bring down in the open field. Has good body lean; falls forward for extra yards. Is a strong pass blocker. Moves feet well, keeps his leverage and picks up blitzes. Has good hands. Catches the ball well on swing routes. Can make plays after the catch.
Weaknesses: Lack of speed limits potential. Is a straight-line runner. Lacks open-field elusiveness. Can't turn the corner and shows only one gear. Durability was a problem last season. Runs too high at times and takes many shots to his body.
Bottom line: Carter was set to emerge as one of the nation's premier backs as a senior, but he started slowly and a knee injury hampered him all season. His straight-line style and lack of speed are big concerns. Throw in the health problems and Carter projects as a mid-round prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 4.0**

Quentin Griffin
ROBERT SEALE / TSN

16. Quentin Griffin, Oklahoma

5-8 194 4.52 6th round
NFL comparison: Amos Zereoue, Steelers
Strengths: Is shifty and elusive. Has smooth hips. Makes defenders miss in the open field. Has good initial burst to the hole. Is tough for his size. Is patient. Finds cutback lanes. Is more quick than fast. Has good hands. Can catch on the run and away from his body.
Weaknesses: Is vastly undersized. Can't carry a full load. Tends to wear down late in games. Doesn't pick up enough yards after contact. Goes down too easily. Lacks a second gear in the open field. Lacks the straight-line speed to consistently turn the corner. Is overmatched as a pass blocker.
Bottom line: A productive college runner, Griffin has all the right intangibles—sure-handedness, goal-line savvy, a strong work ethic and dedication to the weight room. However, he is an overachiever who thrived in a one-back offense behind some great lines and doesn't have much upside. He could develop into a serviceable backup, occasional third-down back and special teams contributor. **FINAL GRADE: 3.9**

17. Dahrran Diedrick, Nebraska

5-11⅝ 219 4.50 6th round
NFL comparison: Shawn Bryson, Bills
Strengths: Has ideal NFL measurables. Is strong and well built. Has adequate height. Is a powerful runner. Has great lower-body strength. Lowers his shoulders and delivers blows. Picks up good yards after contact. Has nice speed and shows a decent second gear in the open field. Is punishing at times and can wear down defenses.
Weaknesses: Has average running skills. Runs high and doesn't make many defenders miss. Isn't very elusive in traffic. Doesn't show great vision or patience between the tackles. Has limited experience as a receiver and pass blocker. Must improve his leverage.
Bottom line: Diedrick led the Big 12 in rushing as a junior, but his production tailed off as a senior. The problem with him as an NFL prospect is a similar tune for Nebraska backs: He is a straight-line runner, and many of his big runs come off the option, where he simply gets the ball outside off the pitch and has little work to do to elude defenders and find holes. Diedrick has good natural skills, but there is big bust potential here. **FINAL GRADE: 3.6**

18. Sultan McCullough, USC

5-11⅛ 185 4.50 6th round
NFL comparison: Trung Canidate, Rams
Strengths: Is speedy with great burst and acceleration. Is a huge big-play threat; may be the fastest back in this class. Consistently turns the corner. Shows a second gear in the open field. Also can make big plays as a receiver. Is explosive after the catch and wins most races.
Weaknesses: Durability is a concern after he missed time with an abdominal strain as a junior. Is undersized and lacks power. Goes down too easily. Is too straight-line. Doesn't show enough enough patience or vision. Misses too many cutback lanes. Hasn't learned to consistently wait for holes. Is an inconsistent receiver. Route-running and hands need work. Is often overmatched as a blocker at the point of attack.
Bottom line: McCullough, a former sprinter, has much big-play potential as a third-down back and would fit best in a spread offense. But he lacks the size, power and elusiveness to carry the load, so he must improve as a receiver to make it as a situational option. He also lacks experience as a returner.
FINAL GRADE: 3.5

19. Avon Cobourne, West Virginia

5-7⅜ 186 4.71 6th round
NFL comparison: Terrell Fletcher, Chargers
Strengths: Is naturally gifted and was very productive in college. Has great vision and quickness. Is compact and runs low to the ground. Changes directions well. Finds cutback lanes. Shows good initial burst to the hole and is a better inside runner than size would indicate because of vision and patience. Also is a good receiver and is durable and tough for his size.
Weaknesses: Lacks the size and speed of a

productive NFL back. Lacks the acceleration to turn the corner. Will get caught more often than he did in college. Lacks power as an interior runner. Is overwhelmed as a pass blocker. Doesn't pose matchup problems as a receiver. Doesn't show an extra gear after the catch.
Bottom line: Cobourne was a full-time starter since his redshirt freshman season in 1999. He finished his career as one of the Big East's all-time productive backs, but he was a much better college back than he is a pro prospect. He has obvious size and speed limitations. There may be a place for him as a versatile reserve, third-down back and kickoff returner, but it seems his poor measurables will catch up to him. **FINAL GRADE: 3.2**

20. Derek Watson, South Carolina State

6-0½ 210 4.55 7th round
NFL comparison: DeShaun Foster, Panthers
Strengths: Is a skilled runner. Has adequate size and speed. Is more quick than fast. Has good initial burst through the hole. Has excellent vision. Finds cutback lanes. Has great change-of-direction skills. Quickly gets to full speed. Runs bigger than his size. Has good strength. Gains good yards after contact when lowering his shoulders. Has great hands and receiving skills. Has played slot receiver. Has a good feel for routes and catches ball well on the run.
Weaknesses: Off-field and character issues are the biggest concerns. Is streaky on the field. Needs more consistency and leverage as a runner. Tends to run too high and absorbs many shots. Doesn't have exceptional size or speed. Is an inconsistent blocker. Not always aware of assignments and gets out of position at times in blitz pickup.
Bottom line: Watson's college career was a tale of trouble at two schools (he started his career at South Carolina). He was a productive back in the rare times he wasn't battling injuries and off-field issues. Watson once looked like a first-day prospect and also had great potential as a kickoff returner, but his inability to stay on the field has greatly diminished his value. **FINAL GRADE: 2.8**

21. Malaefou MacKenzie, USC

5-9⅞ 223 4.60 7th round
NFL comparison: Sammy Morris, Bills
Strengths: Is a well-built back with good power as a runner. Has decent quickness and burst. Hits holes hard and runs with an adequate pad level. Breaks some arm tackles and can be punishing when one-on-one with a defender. Has great lower-body strength and thick legs. As a pass blocker, he anchors against the blitz well. Has good hands and looks comfortable running routes and catching the ball.
Weaknesses: Durability is big concern. Has never been a full-time back and can't carry the load. Tends to wear down if given too many carries. Lacks great speed and slows down over course of games. Won't turn the corner in the NFL and lacks a second gear in the open field. Is somewhat of a straight-line power runner who isn't real elusive.
Bottom line: MacKenzie shared backfield at USC with fellow draft prospects Sultan McCullough and Justin Fargas. He is a physical runner with some upside as a receiver, but his durability problems, lack of speed and limited experience make him a late-round prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 2.5**

22. Nick Maddox, Florida State

5-10⅜ 193 4.60 7th round
NFL comparison: Mike Cloud, Chiefs
Strengths: Is versatile. Has good receiving skills and experience as a punt returner. Is more quick than fast. Is a tough, aggressive runner. Has adequate burst to the hole. Has elusiveness and good vision between the tackles and in the open field. Is smallish but runs with good leverage and power for his size.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal measurables. Is undersized, lacks bulk and has marginal speed. Lacks a second gear in the open field. Isn't a big-play threat as a receiver. Can't consistently turn the corner. Is an inconsistent blocker. Can be overwhelmed against the blitz at the point of attack.
Bottom line: Maddox played often this past season because of starter Greg Jones' injury, but for the most part, he was a reserve who primarily played on third downs. He is versatile, but he doesn't have much upside as a runner, receiver or returner. **FINAL GRADE: 2.3**

23. Antoineo Harris, Illinois

5-10½ 227 4.60 7th round
NFL comparison: Brandon Bennett, Bengals
Strengths: Is squatty and powerful. Runs with good leverage. Shows burst to the hole. Has patience and vision. Finds and hits creases well. Lowers shoulders and delivers blows. Picks up good yards after contact. Is more quick than fast. Has fluid hips. Excels at stopping and starting without losing too much in transition. Shows some open-field elusiveness and is tough to bring down once he has a head of steam. A solid pass blocker who shows good leverage.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal speed. Won't consistently turn the corner in the NFL. Lacks both breakaway speed and a second gear. Durability is a concern; broke his wrist last year. Looks stiff as a receiver. Has trouble catching away from his body and doesn't look comfortable catching on the run.
Bottom line: Harris emerged as a productive runner as a senior. He lacks elite talent, however, and likely will be no more than a backup and special teams contributor in the NFL. But a team should take a chance on this determined inside runner in one of the final two rounds. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

24. Thunder Collins, Nebraska

6-1½ 190 4.55 7th round
NFL comparison: Derrick Blaylock, Chiefs
Strengths: Is a big-play threat as both a runner and receiver. Has good straight-line speed and shows a second gear in the open field. Shows good acceleration out of cuts. Has the speed to turn the corner. Has reliable hands and catches the ball well when on the run. Has good open-field elusiveness. Is durable.
Weaknesses: Was suspended and quit school as a senior. Lacks ideal size and power. Is mediocre between the tackles. Doesn't have great vision or patience. Is too straight-line as an inside runner. Struggles to find cutback lanes. Hits the hole too hard. Is too upright. Takes too many shots and doesn't make enough yards after contact.
Bottom line: Despite the off-field concerns about Collins, he may find a place in the NFL as a return specialist and reserve back. But he isn't worth more than a late-round pick and might not be drafted. **FINAL GRADE: 2.0**

25. Brock Forsey, Boise State

5-11 196 4.71 7th round
NFL comparison: Michael Wiley, Cowboys
Strengths: Is a tough runner with good quickness and burst. Has great body control and runs with good leverage. Is more powerful than size would indicate. Lowers his shoulders well and drives his legs. Has great vision and patience. Finds creases and shows good initial burst. Has soft hands and is a reliable receiver. Can catch the ball on the run, away from his body and over his shoulder. Is a technically sound, tough and consistent pass blocker.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal measurables. Is undersized. Lacks the bulk or power to push the pile. Has marginal top-end speed. Will have trouble turning the corner in the NFL and won't run away from defenders like he did at times in college. Lacks open-field elusiveness and isn't a big-play threat. Is overmatched at times as a pass blocker. Because of his subpar speed, he won't be as productive as a receiver or returner.
Bottom line: Forsey is versatile and the ultimate overachiever. He rarely makes a mistake and works just as hard off the field as he does on it. He doesn't have NFL measurables, but he would be a good player to have in camp and a hard cut to make. **FINAL GRADE: 2.0**

Others: 26. DeMarco McCleskey, Cincinnati, 5-10, 212, 4.73 (40 time); **27.** Marcus Merriweather, Ball State, 6-1⅜, 218, 4.71; **28.** Dontae Walker, Mississippi State, 5-10, 245, 4.65; **29.** Reggie Duncan*, Kansas, 5-8, 210, 4.55; **30.** Keith Burnell, Delaware, 5-10¾, 205, 4.44; **31.** Fred Tally, Arkansas, 5-8½, 180, 4.45; **32.** Joe Smith, Louisiana Tech, 6-1⅛, 216, 4.57; **33.** ReShard Lee*, Middle Tennessee, 5-10, 215, 4.55; **34.** Ryan Johnson, Montana State, 6-0, 203, 4.65; **35.** Montrell Lowe, Purdue, 5-8⅛, 191, 4.75; **36.** Bernard Rambert, Clemson, 5-10⅜, 201, 4.60; **37.** Ahmaad Galloway, Alabama, 5-11½, 222, 4.65; **38.** Tanardo Sharps, Temple, 5-8⅞, 192, 4.65; **39.** Joe Igber, California, 5-7½, 190, 4.73; **40.** Saleem Muhammad, Portland State, 5-11⅛, 212, 4.83; **41.** Henri Childs, Colorado State, 6-1⅛, 217, 4.65; **42.** Victor Ike, Southern University, 5-10⅝, 193, 4.50.

Fullbacks

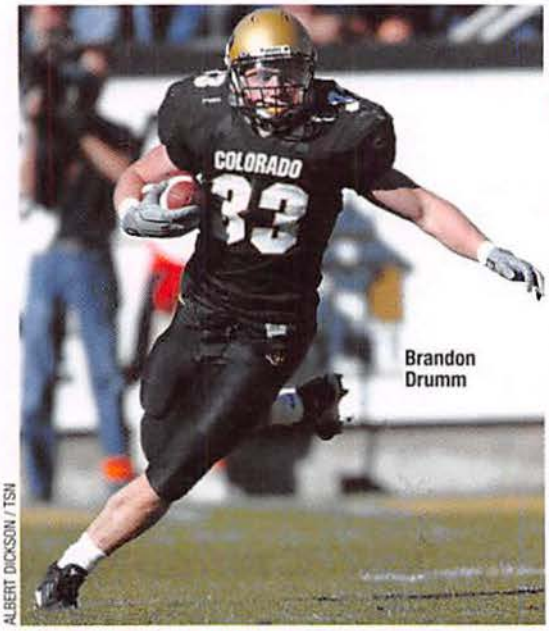
In the past three years, no more than six fullbacks were drafted in any one year, and only one fullback (Heath Evans, 2001) was taken on Day 1. Although there are no standouts this year, the class is a bit better than average because there are more than 10 players who have draftable grades.

Casey Moore isn't great in any specific area, but he's rated No. 1 because of his size and versatility. Ovie Mughelli is a bulldozer of a lead blocker but a limited athlete. Brandon Drumm is an undersized but powerful blocker who has reliable hands. Andrew Pinnock is a bruising runner who has room to improve as a blocker. Depending on what teams are looking for in a fullback, Moore might not be the first one picked.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Fullbacks taken	8
Round 1	0
Round 2	0
Round 3	0
Round 4	3
Round 5	3
Round 6	0
Round 7	2



Brandon Drumm

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

1. Casey Moore, Stanford

6-1½ 240 4.74 (40 time) 4th round

NFL comparison: Fred Beasley, 49ers

Strengths: Is versatile and has good athleticism for his size. Has good bulk and power as a blocker. Does a good job of getting in position as a blocker. Consistently will be able to hit moving targets. Is a powerful and experienced short-yardage runner and a load to bring down in the open field. Shows an ability to catch on the run and away from his body.

Weaknesses: Doesn't always sustain blocks. Doesn't have great initial pop and frequently will be too high at point of attack. Never will be more than a short-yardage ballcarrier at the next level. Lacks great speed as a runner and is effective only in the underneath zone as a receiver.

Bottom line: Moore might not be the best fullback in each aspect of the game, but he has the best overall skills. **FINAL GRADE: 5.4**

2. Ovie Mughelli, Wake Forest

6-0 255 4.75 4th round

NFL comparison: William Henderson, Packers

Strengths: Has ideal size and power as a blocker. Shows good initial pop and leverage at point of attack. Can move laterally and hit a moving target. Can be overpowering at point of attack and does a nice job of driving his legs once locked on to sustain block. Is a consistent short-yardage receiver and is a load to bring down in the open field.

Weaknesses: Is a below-average athlete with marginal speed. Is not a threat as a runner or a receiver. Is marginally elusive as a ballcarrier. Is not a great pile pusher in short-yardage situations.

Bottom line: Despite some injuries, Mughelli basically was a full-time fullback the past three seasons and has emerged as the best blocking fullback in this class. But he's not a great athlete and is just an adequate short-yardage runner. **FINAL GRADE: 5.2**

3. Brandon Drumm, Colorado

6-1⅜ 229 4.75 4th round

NFL comparison: Cecil Martin, Eagles

Strengths: Has good initial pop and power at point of attack. Does nice job of blocking with leverage. Is a tough runner who has experience carrying the ball. Will be able to catch the ball on the run in the short area and is a tough runner to take down in the open field.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal lower-body strength and base as an isolation blocker. Will have trouble sustaining blocks at the next level. Is an adequate athlete for a fullback but doesn't have great speed as a runner or receiver.

Bottom line: Drumm is athletic enough to contribute at times as a receiver and short-yardage runner. But unless he adds bulk and strength, he will have trouble matching up as a blocker at the point of attack. **FINAL GRADE: 5.1**

4. Andrew Pinnock, South Carolina

6-0 265 4.60 5th round

NFL comparison: Tony Richardson, Chiefs

Strengths: Is a powerful runner who has good change of direction skills for his size. Has good burst to the hole and gains a lot of yards after initial contact. Has excellent size and power as a blocker. Has powerful initial pop and generally does a good job of sustaining once he's locked on.

Weaknesses: Takes marginal angles to his blocks and does not always get in good position. Leaves his feet at times and lunges at other times. Lacks the speed and home run-hitting threat of a feature back at this level. Is inconsistent in the passing game.

Bottom line: Pinnock is multidimensional

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-1	245	4.60
NFL minimum	5-10	225	4.85

Versatile fullbacks, such as the 49ers' Fred Beasley, are tough to find. So teams settle for a dominant lead blocker or a smaller, more athletic player. Lorenzo Neal is the former, using his size, strength and technique to open holes. Larry Centers is the latter, using his hands, quickness and route-running savvy as a receiver out of the backfield.

ON THE RISE: Justin Griffith, Mississippi State
Must add bulk, but he's a tough runner. Showed reliable hands at the Senior Bowl.

ON THE DECLINE: Andrew Pinnock, South Carolina
Reminds us of Mike Alstott, but there are few Alstott roles in the NFL, and he doesn't run with same force.

SLEEPER: Jeremi Johnson, Western Kentucky
Got in shape last season and dominated at Division I-AA level with size as a blocker and toughness as a runner.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Chris Davis, Syracuse
A former tailback, this undersized but unusually fast fullback showed signs of the light coming on last year.

BIGGEST RISK: Brandon Drumm, Colorado
Might have been the nation's most efficient run blocker the past two seasons, but he's not a great athlete.

BEST ISOLATION BLOCKER: Ovie Mughelli, W. Forest
Used his natural size, leverage and power to put on a blocking clinic during week of practice at Senior Bowl.

BEST SHORT-YARDAGE RUNNER: Casey Moore, Stanford
This versatile, 240-pounder can do it all. As a senior, he averaged 6.4 yards on 54 carries.

BEST RECEIVER: B.J. Askew, Michigan
Is a tailback/fullback hybrid with athleticism, toughness and hands. Caught 34 passes as a senior.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

and has great size and power as a ballcarrier but is not a fluid receiver. He must improve his blocking technique in order to find a role in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 4.9**

5. B.J. Askew, Michigan

6-3 228 4.60 5th round

NFL comparison: Najeh Davenport, Packers

Strengths: Is a powerful runner who has adequate straight-line speed for his size. Picks up a lot of yards after contact. Has adequate hands and a lot of potential as a short-yardage receiver out of the backfield.

Weaknesses: Does not have the speed or running skills to be a full-time back and lacks the ideal size and blocking skills of a fullback. Is more of a one-back type.

Bottom line: Askew is a running back/fullback 'tweener whose strength is his versatility. He has the mentality to contribute on special teams. **FINAL GRADE: 4.6**

6. Justin Griffith, Mississippi State

5-10⅞ 229 4.75 6th round

NFL comparison: Rob Konrad, Dolphins

Strengths: Is a squatty, powerful runner who will push the pile and create his own running room in short-yardage situations. Does a nice job of catching the ball on swing passes and is tough to bring down in the open field. Is quick and does a nice job of changing directions as a blocker in space.

Weaknesses: Does not have great speed. Lacks the size and power of an isolation blocker at this level. Neck injury from 2001 is a lingering concern.

Bottom line: Though Griffith doesn't fit the normal profile of a blocking fullback, his versatility could be a real asset in the right offense. **FINAL GRADE: 3.3**

7. Jeremi Johnson, Western Kentucky

5-10½ 270 4.75 7th round

NFL comparison: Charles Stackhouse, Giants

Strengths: Is massive and has good power and agility for his size. Is a tough inside runner who will create his own room to run at times and has a second gear once he gets going. Is a load to bring down in the open field. Has good initial pop and can engulf linebackers as an isolation blocker. Has excellent hands.

Weaknesses: Will make mental mistakes and miss assignments in pass protection. Does not do a great job of finding his block at the second level. Lacks the speed and elusiveness to carry any type of consistent running load in the NFL.

Bottom line: Johnson is an intriguing late-round prospect because of his size, hands and blocking skills. **FINAL GRADE: 2.9**

8. J.P. Comella, Boston College*

5-11⅜ 238 4.85 7th round

NFL comparison: Mack Strong, Seahawks

Strengths: Is a productive, technically sound, consistent blocker who has good power and pop at the point of attack. Plays with a mean streak. Has decent hands and is a competent short-yardage receiver.

Weaknesses: Is inexperienced and not effective in any area of the running game. Lack of ideal size for a blocker and durability are concerns.

Bottom line: Comella, brother of Titans fullback Greg Comella, is a better receiver than he is runner, and blocking is his strong suit. **FINAL GRADE: 2.6**

9. Chris Davis, Syracuse

5-11 232 4.55 7th round

NFL comparison: Patrick Pass, Patriots

Strengths: A former tailback, he has good speed, quickness and elusiveness. Has a burst after the catch and shows a second gear in the open field. Is an athletic blocker who can slide laterally in pass protection.

Weaknesses: Does not have great experience at fullback, and technique as a blocker is marginal. Will not overwhelm anyone at point of attack. Durability is a concern.

Bottom line: What makes Davis an intriguing late-round pick or free-agent pickup are his speed and hands for his size. He has enough of an upside that a team can bring him in as a special teams contributor and decide whether he can make an impact on offense. **FINAL GRADE: 2.3**

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

10. James Lynch, Maryland*

5-10 273 4.88 7th round

NFL comparison: Robert Thomas, Cowboys

Strengths: Is a massive load at the point of attack as a blocker. Does a decent job of moving in the open field and looks fluid when hitting moving targets. Can engulf linebackers at the point of attack. Is tough to tackle as a runner because of his size and quickness.

Weaknesses: Blocking technique needs work. Doesn't show much change of direction skills as a runner and has marginal speed. Makes catches when facing the quarterback but struggles to catch the ball on the run.

Bottom line: Lynch is an intriguing prospect who will be considered in the last couple of rounds as a developmental blocking fullback. He likely will go undrafted, though. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 11. Tom Lopienski, Notre Dame, 5-11½, 251, 4.75 (40 time); **12.** Dawan Moss, Michigan State, 5-10¼, 235, 4.55; **13.** J.T. Wall, Georgia, 5-11⅜, 253, 4.85; **14.** Claude Diggs, Richmond, 6-0¾, 245, 4.82; **15.** Steven Costa, UNLV, 6-1½, 223, 4.46; **16.** Thomas Tapeh, Minnesota, 6-0⅝, 231, 4.76; **17.** Cotra Jackson, N.C. State, 5-11⅜, 213, 4.91; **18.** Joshua Rue, Duquesne, 6-0⅜, 245, 4.66; **19.** Chad Killian, Maryland, 6-1½, 265, 4.92; **20.** Derek Delmarter, Jacksonville State, 6-1¼, 240, 4.76; **21.** Ivory Brown, Louisiana-Monroe, 5-11, 278, 4.78; **22.** Joe Weber, Texas A&M, 6-0, 230, 4.70; **23.** Chad Pierson, USC, 6-0¼, 240, 4.80; **24.** Matt Trissel, Texas, 5-11⅝, 241, 4.85; **25.** Jason Shumaker, Kansas, 6-0, 240, 4.83.

SPOTLIGHT

Andrew Pinnock
South Carolina

If Andrew Pinnock's senior season is any indication of how he deals with adversity, he should be well-equipped to handle the physical and mental challenges the NFL brings.

The Gamecocks were 2 yards from scoring a touchdown in the final seconds against Georgia on a rainy afternoon, courtesy of Tropical Storm Hanna, last September in Columbia, S.C. But Pinnock fumbled a pitch, and the Bulldogs held on for a 13-7 victory.

It was the second fumble Pinnock lost in the game, and the outcome devastated him. He says it was "one of the toughest situations I've ever had to deal with in my athletic career."

Pinnock played the next game, against Temple, but he didn't get a single carry—a message sent by the coaching staff about the importance of ball security. Though others might have made a stink about the snub, Pinnock didn't. Running backs coach Todd Fitch was impressed with Pinnock's attitude and resolve.

"He kept his mouth shut, kept working hard and didn't fumble the rest of the year," Fitch says.

That, in essence, is Pinnock, an impressive combination of size (6-0, 265), speed and character. Pinnock was used mostly as a running back during his college career, but his size suggests he's best-suited as a fullback, a position primarily used as for blocking in the NFL. If that's the case, Pinnock is fine with that. He has no role preference; he just wants to win.

"I'm a whatever-you-need back," Pinnock says. "If you need me to block, I can go out there and block. If you need me to run, I can go out there and run, or I can catch the ball out of the backfield."

One AFC scouting director says Pinnock has some running skills and instincts, but he needs to work on his blocking techniques. And, as with many players, it will be a matter of finding the right system for Pinnock to make the most of his talent.

"I think certain teams are going to be more interested in him than others," the scouting director says. "If it's a one-back team that likes to put a big back in there and run a bounce play and maybe run some counter stuff inside, then they're going to like this guy more than a two-back team that's going to visualize him more as a fullback who can block and catch the ball out of the backfield. He's more of a fit for a one-back team than for a two-back team." —*Roger Kuznia*

Wide receivers

It could have been an exceptional group had Bernard Berrien and Lee Evans stayed healthy and had Rashad Woods and Roy Williams entered early, but the wide receivers class still is above average.

As is the case each season, underclassmen make up the majority of the top receivers. Charles Rogers, Andre Johnson, Anquan Boldin, Brandon Lloyd, Kelley Washington, Teyo Johnson and Shaun McDonald all likely will be picked on Day 1.

Rogers might be the most physically gifted receiver to enter the draft since Keyshawn Johnson in 1996, and Andre Johnson isn't far behind him. Washington would have been a top 15 pick had it not been for a neck injury he sustained last season. The team that drafts Teyo Johnson basically will need to create a new position for the hybrid wide receiver/H-back.

Taylor Jacobs and Bryant Johnson will be the first senior receivers selected, likely in that order.

Arnaz Battle is the enigma in the receivers class. A former quarterback, he has just one full year of experience at receiver, but he made a lot of scouts take a second look with his performance at the Senior Bowl.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Wide receivers taken 34	
Round 1	3
Round 2	8
Round 3	3
Round 4	1
Round 5	6
Round 6	6
Round 7	7

1. Charles Rogers, Michigan State*

6-2⅞ 203 4.40 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Terrell Owens, 49ers

Hands: Shows terrific hands and makes tough catches in the clutch. Catches the ball on the run at full speed. Makes spectacular catches. Has great hand strength when challenging for the ball in a crowd. Rarely lets passes get into his body. Consistently makes catches over his shoulder. **Grade: 8.9**

Patterns: Is an accomplished route runner. Has terrific initial burst and gets to top speed quickly. Shows a good feel for zone coverage and knows how to set up defensive backs man-to-man. Drives defenders off the line and creates separation with size and speed. Stops and starts quickly. Shows great burst out of breaks and uses his body to shield defenders from the ball. **Grade: 8.8**

Run after catch: Catches ball in stride. Isn't overly elusive but is explosive because of speed. Shows great vision and change-of-direction skills. Is a tough runner who breaks some tackles and wins every open-field race. **Grade: 8.8**

Release: Is tough to jam. Likes to get physical. Has a strong upper body. Uses swim and rip moves to break jams. Has such great initial quickness and speed that defenders can't afford to miss him at the line. **Grade: 8.9**

Blocking: Is an above-average blocker when he works at it. At times, works to get downfield and get in a shot. Other times, doesn't put in a great effort. Shows a mean streak. Uses upper-body strength and drives legs to sustain blocks. **Grade: 8.5**

Bottom line: Rogers is the complete package: size, speed, quickness, leaping ability, hands and elusiveness. He is somewhat immature and didn't give a consistent effort as a junior, especially when the Spartans' season fell apart. He's similar to Terrell Owens—as a player and a person. Rogers is the most gifted and proven receiver in this class and should be the second player drafted overall.

FINAL GRADE: 8.8

2. Andre Johnson, Miami (Fla.)*

6-3 220 4.40 1st round

NFL comparison: David Boston, Cardinals

Hands: Makes spectacular plays. Catches balls over his head, away from his body and on the run. Is a great leaper and wins most jump-ball battles. Has both the long arms and strong hands to pull the ball away from defenders. Still drops too many catchable balls because he loses focus. **Grade: 8.7**

Patterns: Needs to study more film. Has trouble setting up defenders and lacks a great feel for soft spots in coverage. Gets away with much because of his natural gifts. Shows great speed and initial burst. Outruns most defensive backs. Consistently stretches the field. Excels at driving defenders off the line. Breaks off his routes with suddenness. Shows

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

Taylor Jacobs

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-3	210	4.40
NFL minimum	5-8⅝	175	4.65

Scouts must be wary of becoming so enamored with speed and size that they fail to recognize simple ability. Some of the NFL's best receivers lack 4.4 speed and are barely 6-0. As a result, teams look for receivers with the quickness and strength to beat press coverage, the tenacity and hands to pull in tough catches in traffic and the leaping ability to be a threat downfield and in the red zone.

ON THE RISE: Kassim Osgood, San Diego State
He's still raw, but he was third in the nation with 108 receptions in 2002, his first season in Division I-A.

ON THE DECLINE: Terrence Edwards, Georgia
At 163 pounds, he might lack the size to hold up in the NFL. There also are concerns about his consistency.

SLEEPER: Ryan Hoag, Gustavus Adolphus
He started out at Wake Forest as a soccer player, then transferred to the Division III level to play football.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Kareem Kelly, USC
The Pac-10's offensive player of the year in 1999, he lost focus the past two years. Was USC's No. 3 receiver last year.

BIGGEST RISK: Kelley Washington, Tennessee
The third-most physically gifted receiver in this class, he has health and character issues and is inexperienced.

BEST HANDS: Andre Johnson, Miami (Fla.)
After Charles Rogers, no other receiver is more equipped to provide the exceptional catch.

BEST AFTER THE CATCH: Anquan Boldin, Florida St.
He has a big upside as an NFL receiver now that he has regained his 4.4 speed after a knee injury in 2001.

BIGGEST VERTICAL THREAT: Charles Rogers, Michigan St.
His exceptional size, initial burst, speed, leaping ability and hands make him an instant vertical threat.

TOUGHEST OVER MIDDLE: Bryant Johnson, Penn St.
A prototypical possession receiver who runs smooth routes, he is absolutely fearless over the middle.

BEST DOWNFIELD BLOCKER: Sam Aiken, N. Carolina
He takes pride in his run-blocking skills, which is one of the reasons his stock is on the rise.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

great burst out of his breaks. Is a smooth route runner who doesn't waste much motion. **Grade: 8.4**

Run after catch: Is explosive. Immediately gets upfield after catching on the run. Has breakaway speed. Shows a second gear in the open field. Isn't very elusive and doesn't do much dancing or change of direction but is a tough runner who lowers his shoulders and picks up yards after contact. Shows good vision and patience. Uses blockers in front of him to his advantage. **Grade: 8.6**

Release: Excels at breaking press coverage. Has terrific initial quickness. Has the size and strength to overpower most defenders at point of attack. Is physical and competitive. Shows good upper-body strength. Uses swim and club moves when a defender tries to jam him. **Grade: 8.6**

Blocking: Is competitive here. Works to get downfield and uses physical run blocking to set up defenders in the passing game. Gets into many shoving matches and wins most of them. Works to sustain blocks and excels at locking on and driving legs. **Grade: 8.7**

Bottom line: Johnson, a former college sprint champion, is a big-time NFL prospect because of his pure speed, but he also is strong, physical and fearless going over the middle. He still is raw and could have used another year at Miami to improve his route-running skills and concentration. **FINAL GRADE: 8.6**

3. Taylor Jacobs, Florida

5-11¾ 201 4.40 **1st round**

NFL comparison: Rod Smith, Broncos

Hands: Better than average. Consistently catches balls over his head. Has good leaping ability and is acrobatic. Has trouble catching on the run, which takes away from his run-after-catch production. **Grade: 8.4**

Patterns: Has good size and excellent speed but isn't physical. Gets pushed around at times and most of his struggles come against strong, physical corners. Shows good burst and quickness off the line. Is a vertical threat. Has great body control. Sinks his hips and bursts in and out of breaks. Has some big-play flair. Must improve coverage recognition. **Grade: 8.3**

Run after catch: Is a threat when he gets the ball in stride. Has good vision and excels at changing directions. Shows a second gear in the open field. Can run away from most defenders. **Grade: 8.5**

Release: Shows initial burst and speed to gain separation. Must improve strength and show better moves to break the press in the NFL. **Grade: 7.9**

Blocking: Is willing to work hard here but gets pushed around too much for his size. Shows marginal pop and struggles to sustain blocks once locked on. **Grade: 7.8**

Bottom line: Durability will be a concern with Jacobs, but he proved last season he has the potential to develop into a legitimate No. 1 receiver on an NFL team. **FINAL GRADE: 8.2**

4. Anquan Boldin, Florida State*

6-2 225 4.65 **1st round**

NFL comparison: Hines Ward, Steelers

Hands: Makes acrobatic catches at times. Can catch on the run without losing much momentum. Pulls down balls away from his frame, over his shoulder and over his head. Loses concentration at times. Drops catchable passes when trying to get upfield too quickly. **Grade: 8.1**

Patterns: Has good initial burst. Drives defenders off line. Has great speed but isn't much of a deep threat. Is much better on short-to-intermediate routes. Shows a good feel for coverage and has become a solid, consistent route runner underneath. Has great body control and gets separation out of breaks. Shows outstanding lateral movement and change of direction skills. Has a second gear. Tracks balls in the air. **Grade: 8.0**

Run after catch: Has burst and explosiveness. Is elusive and has good lateral movement. Excels at stopping and starting. Has above-average vision and patience. Runs with good power and strength. **Grade: 8.5**

Release: Spends much time in the slot to avoid press coverage. Needs to develop more moves but is quick, strong and physical enough to improve. **Grade: 7.6**

Blocking: Works to get downfield. Is feisty and competitive. Lacks great technique and must improve leverage and take better angles. **Grade: 7.8**

Bottom line: Boldin, a converted quarterback, is raw and has durability questions, but he is a natural athlete. He has good size and looks to be regaining his 4.4 speed. That's the biggest reason why a team may take a chance on him late in the first round. **FINAL GRADE: 8.0**

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

5. Bryant Johnson, Penn State

6-1⅞ 208 4.57 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Amani Toomer, Giants

Hands: Has improved. Has long arms and is athletic enough to adjust to poorly thrown balls. Has good leaping ability and can make spectacular catches. Pulls down the ball over his head and on the run. **Grade: 8.2**

Patterns: Is mostly a possession receiver. Is strong and drives defenders off the line well. Is fearless going over the middle. Has learned to use size to his advantage. Is fluid in running routes and shows good recognition. Is a big, physical target. Has adequate speed but won't run past many NFL cornerbacks. Isn't much of a deep threat. Has some trouble gaining separation. **Grade: 8.0**

Run after catch: A tough runner who gains speed as he goes. Plucks well on the run and gets upfield. Shows good body control and flashes some change-of-direction skills. Gets what is available but not much more. Lacks great burst and elusiveness. Doesn't make

SPOTLIGHT

Andre Johnson
Miami (Fla.)

They started noticing before the 2001 season, after coming to Miami in search of cornerbacks. The Hurricanes had quite a pair in Mike Rumph and Phillip Buchanon, and each was selected in the first round of the 2002 NFL draft.

One problem: Neither could cover Andre Johnson.

Here was this sophomore, who had caught all of three passes in 2000, tearing it up against two of the nation's premier corners. The NFL evaluators started to get a little nervous.

Had these two defenders been fooling everybody?

"They were having a lot of trouble with him," says an NFC scout, "so I went up to the Miami's receivers coach (Curtis Johnson) and asked who was doing that. He smiled and said, 'He's not just some guy. He's the real deal.' "

Turns out Rumph and Buchanon weren't the only people who couldn't cover Johnson. By the time Johnson (6-3, 227) had finished two seasons as a starter for the Canes, he had established himself as one of the most dangerous deep threats to come out of the college ranks in a long time. His 52 receptions and nine touchdowns in 2002 were impressive, but his 21.0-yard average was ridiculous.

But what did you expect from a big, strong receiver with enough speed to win the Big East indoor 60-yard and outdoor 100-yard sprint championships? Johnson has the heft to do the heavy-duty interior work and the speed to fly by just about anyone silly enough to challenge him one-on-one in press coverage. "He's like (the Cardinals') David Boston," says one NFC college scouting director. "He uses his size really well, and he can run like hell."

Miami was set at the receiver position, with Reggie Wayne and Santana Moss, when Johnson came to school, so he asked to redshirt. Johnson spent the next two years learning from his elders and developing his body in the weight room. "He thought he was a basketball player when he got here," Curtis Johnson says, laughing. "He got over that quickly and went to work."

By the time Andre Johnson was a junior, he was benching 340 pounds and squatting nearly 500, each total among the best on the team.

"He can outjump people for the ball, and when he goes inside, you can't knock him loose," an NFC scout says. "He's big enough that he can shield defensive backs from the ball. He can do everything."

Even if it comes at the expense of a teammate or two. —*Michael Bradley*

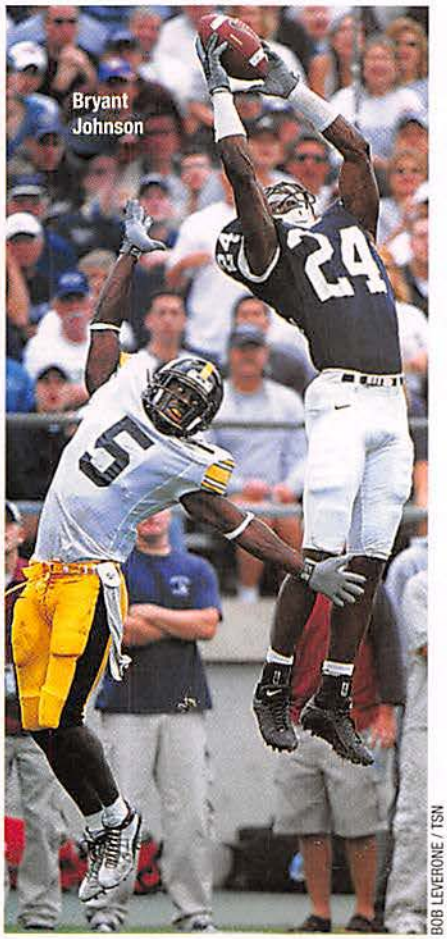
many defenders miss in the open field. Takes a while to reach top-end speed. **Grade: 7.4**
Release: Must win with size and strength because he lacks great suddenness and initial quickness. Won't beat cornerbacks deep if he breaks press, so more of them will challenge him at the line. **Grade: 7.5**
Blocking: This is a real strength. Shows initial pop at point of attack. Is competitive and works to get downfield. **Grade: 8.0**
Bottom line: Johnson lacks great speed and won't be much of a vertical threat, but he has the size, leaping ability and hands to create matchup problems in the red zone. He's a good second-round value because he should develop into a solid No. 2 receiver. **FINAL GRADE: 7.8**

6. Brandon Lloyd, Illinois*

6-1 178 4.65 **2nd round**
NFL comparison: Johnnie Morton, Chiefs
Hands: Consistent and sometimes spectacular in this area. Makes many plays on jump balls because of long arms, excellent leaping ability and terrific concentration. Shows soft hands when on the run and catches passes away from his body, over his head and over his shoulder. Excels at finding and tracking down the ball in the air. **Grade: 8.3**
Patterns: Has improved route-running skills. Shows good quickness and sudden breaks. Shows adequate burst out of cuts and gains separation on short and intermediate routes. Is somewhat of a big-play threat. Has neither great bulk nor strength but is fearless over the middle. Shows great concentration in traffic. Is aware of the first-down marker. Excels at working the sidelines. **Grade: 7.6**
Run after catch: Builds speed as he goes. Shows good burst and quickness after the catch. Has excellent lateral movement. Doesn't show good natural vision or instincts. Tends to dance too much. Doesn't make tacklers miss in the open field. **Grade: 7.7**
Release: Has good initial quickness and excellent lateral movement. Sidesteps press coverage with good footwork. Will have trouble against big, physical cornerbacks. **Grade: 7.4**
Blocking: Limited strength and lack of bulk are big problems here. Is willing to sustain blocks but lacks upper-body strength to do so. Is a wall-off and position blocker. Lacks a mean streak. Gets pushed around by big defensive backs. **Grade: 7.3**
Bottom line: Lloyd is a consistent receiver and has good downfield qualities. He might slip to the late second round, but he has a chance to become a solid No. 2 receiver. **FINAL GRADE: 7.7**

7. Kelley Washington, Tennessee*

6-4 225 4.45 **2nd round**
NFL comparison: Randy Moss, Vikings
Hands: Has big, soft hands and long arms. Is a natural pass catcher. Makes catches on the run and in traffic. Outjumps most defensive backs. Concentration is a concern. Drops some catchable passes; takes eyes off ball and tries to get upfield too soon. **Grade: 7.8**
Patterns: Is big, strong and physical with good speed. Is a matchup problem for most defensive backs. Uses body well to shield defenders from ball. Is raw at understanding coverages and running routes. Doesn't set up defenders well. Tends to tip off his routes. Rounds off many routes. **Grade: 7.4**
Run after catch: Is a long strider with excellent change-of-direction skills, vision and explosion. Shows good body control and eludes defenders in traffic. Must do better at getting upfield; dances too much and tries to cut back across the grain. Despite lack of elite speed, shows a second gear in the open field and rarely loses a foot race. **Grade: 8.0**



BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Release: Is tough to jam at line. Has good initial quickness. Has a strong upper body. Consistently gets a clean release. Drives defensive backs off the line with burst, size and power. **Grade: 7.7**
Blocking: Tips off plays by his stance. Has the size and strength to be good in this area but shows poor technique and desire. Lacks leverage. Struggles to drive legs and sustain blocks. Takes marginal angles. **Grade: 6.7**
Bottom line: Washington, a late bloomer, is the complete physical package. He has good size, leaping ability, strength, hands, body control and speed. There are major concerns, however. He is very raw. He is arrogant and can become a team distraction. Long-term durability is a question after recent neck surgery and a past knee injury. He has all the skills but is a big risk. **FINAL GRADE: 7.5**

8. Teyo Johnson, Stanford*

6-6⅝ 242 4.65 **2nd round**
NFL comparison: Joe Jurevicius, Buccaneers
Hands: Is smooth. Has a long reach and can outjump most defensive backs. Shows good concentration. Catches ball on the run and away from his body. **Grade: 7.6**
Patterns: Is athletic. Makes more sudden cuts in routes than most tight ends or receivers his size. Is a big threat on fade routes and in the red zone. Excels at winning jump balls. Has good body control. Uses body well to shield defenders and gets in good catching position. Lack of top-end speed is a concern. Takes too long to get going. Lacks great burst out of breaks and is more of a glider. Is a downfield threat because of his size, hands and leaping ability but doesn't outrun many defenders. **Grade: 7.3**
Run after catch: Is tough to tackle in the open field. Is a long strider who builds speed as he goes. Is neither explosive nor quick. Lacks good straight-line speed. Lacks great initial upfield burst and doesn't shake many defenders. **Grade: 6.8**
Release: Is not sudden enough in moves. Lacks initial quickness. Uses his size on the perimeter to drive defenders off the line but struggles against big defensive backs who match his size because he doesn't have the burst or speed to drive them back. Lacks experience getting a release at tight end. Is big enough and athletic enough to get a clean release against most linebackers but must work on technique if moved inside. **Grade: 7.0**
Blocking: Works to get downfield. Gets in good position and drives legs once locked on to a defender. Lacks the size to match up inside as a tight end. Plays too high and loses power because of poor leverage. Has decent upper-body strength but only marginal lower-body strength. Must be in motion or have an angle to match up on blocks. **Grade: 7.8**
Bottom line: Johnson, a former basketball forward, is a wide receiver/tight end 'tweener with much upside. Has the size and athleticism to cause matchup problems. His lack of a true position poses a draft risk, however. He doesn't have pure wideout speed or solid strength for a tight end. A team with a flexible and creative offense likely will take a second-round chance on him. **FINAL GRADE: 7.3**

9. Sam Aiken, North Carolina

6-1 202 4.65 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Rod Gardner, Redskins
Strengths: Has good size. Is tough to press at the line. Uses strength to his advantage. Is fearless over the middle. Has solid, reliable hands. Catches the ball in traffic and uses his body to shield defenders. Shows good body control and agility. Has adequate leaping ability; can make acrobatic catches. Is a smooth route runner. Lowers hips and has good burst in and out of cuts. Is a powerful long strider after the catch. Builds speed as he goes. Is one of the best run blockers in receivers class.
Weaknesses: Lack of speed and initial burst are the concerns. Isn't a vertical threat. Has

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SPOTLIGHT Charles Rogers, Michigan State

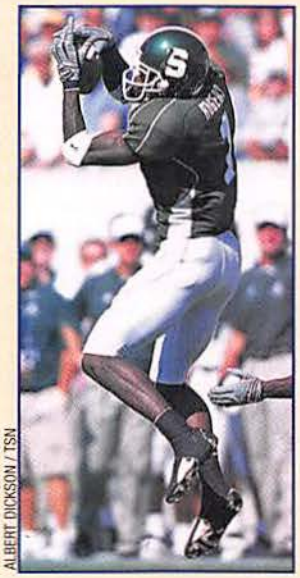
With everything that happened around Charles Rogers last fall, his junior season could have been a bigger bust than *Celebrity Mole*. Instead, he caught 68 passes, scored 13 times, distinguished himself as the nation's best receiving prospect and scored a resounding victory over adversity.

"I had to keep fighting and working hard, no matter what happened," Rogers says. "It was hard, but I didn't believe in quitting."

Rogers' world changed in mid-September, when his grandfather, Benjamin, died. "He was like a father to me," Rogers says. Against Notre Dame in his next game, he caught seven passes for 175 yards and two scores, including a last-minute, how-did-he-do-that grab in the back of the end zone.

The rough road continued in mid-October when starting quarterback Jeff Smoker was suspended, having admitted to a substance-abuse addiction. Two weeks later, Michigan State coach Bobby Williams was fired, leaving the Spartans with a huge leadership deficit that Rogers tried to fill.

"He was one of our best leaders," says former Spartans offensive coordinator Morris Watts. "Charles was always there, trying to get the team going again."



ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

Professional scouts no doubt appreciate Rogers' vocal stewardship, but they are even more impressed with his physical traits. Rogers (6-2 7/8, 203) has run a 4.4 40-yard dash and has lived up to his own assertion that he is a "complete receiver."

"He does everything right," says one AFC scout. "He has soft hands, extends well and plucks the ball out of the air. He will have an advantage in man-to-man situations and against zones because he comes out of his break with such acceleration. I can't believe any receiver will be taken before him."

One NFC scouting director compares Rogers' talent to Randy Moss'. "He's bigger than Moss," the director says. About the only negative scouts have found is that Rogers seems to have lapses of concentration that lead to drops. Rogers admits he may have to improve his focus a little, but the bottom line is he is an all-around threat who can get the ball while split out, in the slot or off motion.

"He's got special attributes," the scouting director says. "He can run, has great hands and great body control. He's a good route runner and has all the tools to be big at the next level." —*Michael Bradley*

neither the burst nor acceleration to catch up to the ball in the air. Isn't elusive or explosive after the catch. Gets caught from behind.
Bottom line: Aiken is reliable, consistent and competitive, but his lack of vertical speed and big-play ability limits his upside. He could emerge as a solid possession-type receiver.
FINAL GRADE: 6.9

10. Talman Gardner, Florida State

6-0 199 4.46 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Peerless Price, Bills
Strengths: Has good size. Has deceptive speed because he gets to top speed quickly. Shows great burst off the line. Breaks the press well. Has great body control. Gets open downfield. Has big-play ability. Tracks down the ball well. Is a good leaper. Challenges for jump balls. Can catch over his shoulder and away from his frame. Can be acrobatic. Is explosive after the catch because of his footwork, body control and initial quickness.
Weaknesses: Lacks the blazing top-end speed and elite size of a vertical receiver. Route-running skills and hands are inconsistent. Drops catchable balls at times. Doesn't show good instincts in zone coverage. Tends to disappear in games. Is an inconsistent blocker.
Bottom line: Gardner offers good size, great initial quickness and big-play flair. He needs to run better routes and show better hands, but he has the skills to develop into a solid No. 2 receiver who has vertical upside.
FINAL GRADE: 6.8

11. Nate Burleson, Nevada

6-1 188 4.50 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Darrell Jackson, Seahawks
Strengths: Has adequate height and speed. Is more quick than fast. Excels at changing directions. Is well-schooled at running routes. Shows good technique, body control and burst out of breaks. Knows how to drop hips and make sharp cuts. Has good hands. Is elusive after the catch and a threat to score whenever he catches on the run. Works hard as a blocker. Rarely takes a play off.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal bulk. Isn't much of a downfield threat. Will have more trouble getting a clean release and separation in the NFL than he did in a wide-open, college scheme. Durability was a minor problem in the past; dislocated his shoulder in 2001.
Bottom line: Burleson is an above-average athlete who has good speed. He plays bigger than his size and is fearless over the middle. He doesn't do much vertically, but he does everything else well and is ready for the NFL. Burleson might fall to the third or fourth round, but he could provide more of an immediate impact than several receivers drafted ahead of him. **FINAL GRADE: 6.6**

12. Shaun McDonald, Arizona State*

5-9 175 4.48 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Troy Brown, Patriots
Strengths: Is quick and fast. Runs crisp, smooth routes. Shows good balance and body control. Sinks hips and stays under control in and out of breaks. Drives defenders back and then breaks off routes. Knows how to set up defensive backs. Shows excellent hands and outstanding concentration. Catches passes on the run without losing much momentum. Also catches away from his body. Is fearless over the middle and challenges for passes in traffic. Rarely drops a catchable ball. Has great lateral quickness and top-end speed. Is elusive. Shows good open-field vision and an extra gear when in a footrace. Has experience returning kicks and punts.
Weaknesses: Has trouble getting clean releases against big, physical cornerbacks. Struggles to beat jams at the line. Is a small target and some speed gets wasted because he lacks size. Doesn't break many tackles. Can't sustain his blocks.
Bottom line: Though he is one of the smallest prospects in this class, he could develop into a No. 2 receiver and should contribute immediately from the slot. **FINAL GRADE: 6.5**

13. Kareem Kelly, USC

5-11 5/8 183 4.46 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Ike Hilliard, Giants
Strengths: Is speedy. Has great experience. Has shown flashes of being a go-to receiver. Makes spectacular catches at times. Shows great burst and quickness off the line. Excels at finding soft spots in zones. Can catch the ball on the run. Is a threat after the catch. Is elusive and flashes a second gear in the open field.
Weaknesses: Drops too many catchable balls. Has trouble catching the ball when he must leave his feet. Loses focus at times and tries to get upfield before he secures the ball. Is undersized. Is only a marginal blocker.
Bottom line: Kelly is talented with some big-time potential, but his inconsistency is why his grade doesn't reflect his natural skills. He could develop into a starter, but he's a risk because of his lack of size and questionable work ethic. **FINAL GRADE: 6.3**

14. Doug Gabriel, Central Florida

6-1 5/8 203 4.54 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Jerry Porter, Raiders
Strengths: Is a big-play threat and has good size and deceptive speed. Builds speed as he goes. Shows good vertical acceleration and a second gear after the catch. Is a great leaper. Can make acrobatic catches. Has great body control along the sidelines. Comes down

with many jump balls. Is a strong blocker with good bulk and power at point of attack.
Weaknesses: Tends to round off routes and telegraph breaks. Lacks burst and suddenness in his cuts. Drops too many catchable balls. Struggles to consistently catch on the run.
Bottom line: Gabriel is an intriguing late first-day or early second-day prospect. He is somewhat raw and needs time to develop, but he has a nice upside. **FINAL GRADE: 6.0**

15. Billy McMullen, Virginia

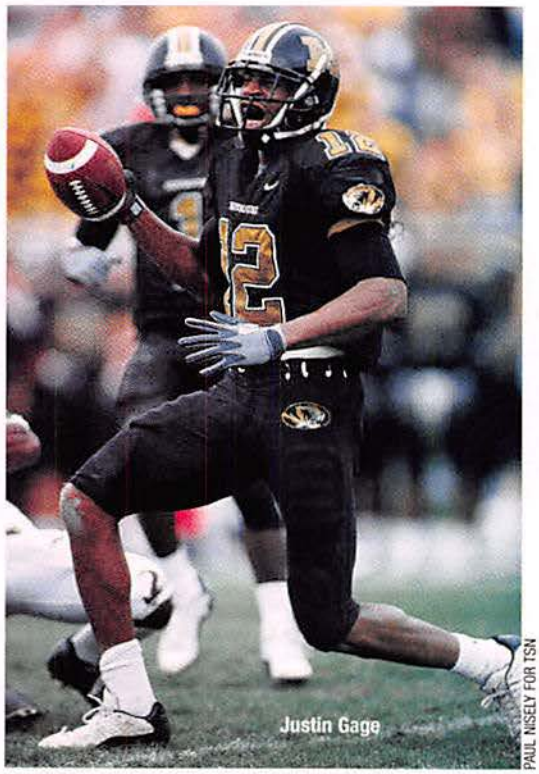
6-3⅜ 208 4.58 4th round
NFL comparison: Marcus Robinson, Bears
Strengths: Is tall and strong with impressive athleticism for his size. Is a smooth route runner and is quick in and out of breaks. Has long arms. Can catch the ball away from his body and over his head. Shows great concentration and body control. Makes spectacular sideline catches. Can catch in traffic. Uses body to shield defenders well. Is a consistent target. Runs sharp routes. Doesn't disappear from games. Takes pride in blocking; is adequate there with a good initial pop.
Weaknesses: Is faster than his clocked time but lacks initial quickness. May have trouble gaining separation out of his breaks in the NFL. Lack of elusiveness after the catch limits big-play explosiveness.
Bottom line: McMullen, one of the biggest receivers in this class, is surprisingly fluid for his size. If he isn't taken late on Day 1, he won't be available for long on Day 2.
FINAL GRADE: 5.8

16. Justin Gage, Missouri

6-4⅛ 203 4.65 4th round
NFL comparison: J.J. Stokes, 49ers
Strengths: Is tall and has great body control. Has quick footwork for his size. Has excellent sideline awareness. Shows good concentration when the ball is in the air. Has soft, reliable hands. Catches the ball over his shoulder and away from his body. Runs smooth routes. Excels at using his body to shield defenders. Goes over the middle and makes tough catches in traffic. Is a sound blocker who has the size and wingspan to produce for an NFL running game.
Weaknesses: Has marginal speed and lacks burst off the ball. Doesn't show great suddenness in his routes. Doesn't drive defenders off the ball. Wins jump balls but rarely gets over the top of defensive backs on vertical routes. Is not as physical as he should be. Doesn't always get the most out of his size.
Bottom line: Gage, who also played power forward for Missouri's basketball team, has good athleticism and body control. He isn't a speedster, but he has the hands, route-running skills and size to develop into a productive possession receiver. A team should take a chance on him early on Day 2.
FINAL GRADE: 5.7

17. Kassim Osgood, San Diego State

6-4¼ 204 4.71 4th round
NFL comparison: Trevor Gaylor, Falcons
Strengths: Is tall with adequate strength and bulk. Has a long stride; builds speed as he runs. Uses long arms and big frame to get quick releases and establish position against physical cornerbacks. Is a consistent route runner with a good feel for zone coverage. Makes catches in traffic, on the run and away from his body. Has big, soft hands. Gets upfield immediately after the catch. Is a threat in the red zone and on fade routes because of height and leaping ability.
Weaknesses: Lacks speed and has marginal quickness. Will struggle to separate from NFL defenders. Isn't much of a downfield threat unless working off jump balls or fade routes. Isn't very elusive after the catch.
Bottom line: Osgood is a big receiver and has terrific hands, a feel for reading coverages and the toughness to work the middle of the field. He is a possible Day 1 prospect but could drop to Day 2 because of his marginal speed and concerns about his ability to separate. **FINAL GRADE: 5.5**


Justin Gage
PAUL NISELY FOR TSN

18. Kevin Curtis, Utah State

5-10¾ 187 4.50 4th round
NFL comparison: Bobby Engram, Seahawks
Strengths: Has good size and speed. Is a smooth, sound route runner who has a great feel for zones. Sets up defensive backs nicely in man coverage. Shows good burst off the line. Breaks routes sharply. Has excellent hands. Is fearless over the middle and makes catches in traffic. Catches passes on the run and away from his body. Has good upfield burst. Can be acrobatic on deep balls. Shows good leaping ability and times jumps well. Is a willing, consistent and efficient blocker.
Weaknesses: Was out of football for three seasons during college. Is lanky. Doesn't have great strength and will struggle to beat the press in the NFL. Lacks the straight-line speed to beat NFL defensive backs deep. Isn't elusive after the catch. Doesn't show great open-field acceleration.
Bottom line: Curtis has adequate size and speed for an NFL prospect and was very productive in his final two college seasons.
FINAL GRADE: 5.4

19. Tyrone Calico, Middle Tennessee

6-3⅜ 219 4.39 4th round
NFL comparison: Danny Farmer, Bengals
Strengths: Has an outstanding combination of size, strength and speed. Is powerful; drives defensive backs off the line. Shows good vertical speed and consistently gets over the top of cornerbacks. Has excellent leaping ability. Is a threat on fade routes and in the red zone. Is a strong runner after the catch and has some elusiveness. Shows a second gear in the open field once he gets going.
Weaknesses: Hands are inconsistent and route-running skills are marginal. Is somewhat of an underachiever. Lacks suddenness on routes and the initial quickness to beat the press. Lacks ideal burst in and out of breaks. Will struggle to separate from NFL cornerbacks. Takes him a while to hit full speed. Has some trouble on quick-hitting passes because he lacks soft hands. Doesn't consistently catch on the run and at times struggles to adjust to balls in the air.
Bottom line: Calico offers a great size-speed combination and flashes some big-play ability, but he is too inconsistent, sloppy and unfocused to draft before the fourth round.
FINAL GRADE: 5.3

20. Bobby Wade, Arizona

5-9¾ 190 4.50 4th round
NFL comparison: Deion Branch, Patriots
Strengths: Is more quick than fast. Has good experience. Uses his feet and burst to break from the press at the line. Shows good initial burst into his routes. Has smooth hips and suddenness in and out of breaks. Has improved his route-running and coverage-recognition skills. Can make catches on the run, away from his body and over his head. Is also a solid punt returner.
Weaknesses: Lacks size, strength and speed. Will have some trouble breaking the press in the NFL. Isn't much of a deep threat. Usually has soft, reliable hands but had some costly drops in college. Occasionally loses focus. Isn't very physical and has some trouble against bigger, stronger corners. Isn't productive enough in traffic and doesn't like to work the middle of the field. Is a marginal run blocker and frequently gets overwhelmed at point of attack.
Bottom line: There are concerns about Wade's character, but he projects as a slot receiver and punt returner who could contribute immediately in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 5.2**

21. J.R. Tolver, San Diego State

6-0¼ 198 4.68 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Bobby Shaw, Jaguars

Strengths: Has good size. Runs smooth routes. Shows a great feel for finding soft spots in zone coverage. Is very fluid in the hips. Shows good body control. Adjusts to ball in the air. Shows reliable hands. Can catch the ball on the run and away from his body. Is strong and tough. Catches the ball in traffic. Is a reliable blocker and is willing to work on that facet.

Weaknesses: Lacks breakaway speed and the acceleration to get over the top of NFL defensive backs consistently. Doesn't have a second gear and is limited after the catch. Initial quickness is marginal. Struggles vs. press coverage at times. Is much better vs. zone than man-to-man. Has trouble generating separation. Doesn't show great burst out of his breaks. Isn't a big-play threat. Lacks great leaping ability and isn't a huge target in the red zone.

Bottom line: Tolver is a good possession receiver whose value shot up as a senior, when he was second in the nation with 128 catches. But he will have much more trouble breaking press coverage and gaining separation in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 5.1**

22. Arnaz Battle, Notre Dame

5-11⅞ 204 4.75 **4th round**

NFL comparison: David Givens, Patriots

Strengths: Is a natural athlete who's built more like a running back. Is a strong, powerful runner. Has good speed and shows some burst. Is elusive in the open field and shows good acceleration. His pass-catching skills have improved significantly, especially his hands. Can catch away from his body and while on the run. Is a threat on reverses and also can throw the ball.

Weaknesses: Two major injuries make durability a concern. Lacks experience at the position. Is an unpolished route runner. Hasn't learned to drop his hips when coming in and out of breaks. Lacks ideal receiver build and agility. Isn't much of a vertical playmaker. Is much better after the short catch than he is working downfield. Must get into his patterns more quickly and learn how to set up defenders in man-to-man coverage.

Bottom line: Battle, a converted quarterback, rebounded from injuries early in his college career (wrist, fibula) to have a strong senior season. His lack of experience, raw technique and durability are concerns, but his athleticism, versatility and upside make him worth drafting early on Day 2. **FINAL GRADE: 5.0**

23. Ronald Bellamy, Michigan

5-11½ 195 4.57 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Kevin Lockett, Jaguars

Strengths: Has adequate size and good hands. Is smooth and consistent and runs routes with some suddenness. Sinks his hips and shows some burst in and out of his breaks. Is more quick than fast. Is fearless over the middle. Challenges for balls in traffic. Is a good leaper and makes spectacular catches at times. Has a good feel for zone coverage. Shows a second gear after the catch and is elusive in the open field.

Weaknesses: Isn't much of a vertical playmaker. Will have trouble getting over the top of NFL defensive backs. Lacks height for a short-to-immediate receiver.

Bottom line: Bellamy never was more than a secondary receiver in college. He lacks great physical skills and big-play ability. He projects as a No. 3 or No. 4 receiver. **FINAL GRADE: 4.9**

Mike Bush

DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

24. Mike Bush, Washington State

6-5½ 200 4.65 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Brian Finneran, Falcons

Strengths: Is tall and strong. Has great confidence in his abilities. Has learned to use size to his advantage. Shields defenders well with his body. Has good leaping ability and comes up with many jump balls. Consistently has proved he can catch passes over his shoulder, away from his body and on the run.

Weaknesses: Is a long strider who takes a while to get going. Lacks good top-end speed. Lacks quickness and burst in and out of breaks. Must gear down. Doesn't show great suddenness. Will struggle to gain separation in the NFL. Has concentration lapses and drops some catchable balls. Is an inconsistent blocker; given his size, he should be much better in that capacity.

Bottom line: Bush was a big target in Washington State's spread offense, which gave him much room to operate and helped mask his lack of route-running burst. He has the size and hands to warrant mid-to-late-round consideration, but his lack of speed and suddenness limits his NFL potential. **FINAL GRADE: 4.7**

25. Terrence Edwards, Georgia

5-11⅜ 163 4.50 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Freddie Mitchell, Eagles

Strengths: Has decent height and speed. Is a proven go-to guy. Has great quickness. Runs sharp routes and shows excellent suddenness in cuts. Has a good feel for zone coverage. Sets up defenders well in single coverage. Can catch on the run. Is elusive after the catch and shows a second gear in the open field.

Weaknesses: Is vastly undersized. Hands are inconsistent. Drops too many catchable balls. Isn't strong and has some trouble breaking the press. Doesn't like going over middle. Won't come up with many balls in traffic. Doesn't break many tackles after the catch. Gets overwhelmed as a blocker at point of attack.

Bottom line: Edwards was a four-year starter who had a roller-coaster college career but finished on a high note as a consistent playmaker. But he lacks strength, is frail for the position by NFL standards and projects as a mid-round pick. **FINAL GRADE: 4.6**

26. Walter Young, Illinois

6-4⅛ 222 4.60 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Donald Hayes, Patriots

Strengths: One of the biggest receivers in this class. Has tremendous size and power. Strong and smooth in running routes and has a good feel for coverage. Uses his body to get position. Has adequate leaping ability and is a threat on fade routes and in the red zone. Uses his size well to overpower defensive backs off the line. Shows great hands and concentration. Is a possession receiver. Has upside because of ability to win jump balls.

Weaknesses: Lacks great speed and won't consistently get over the top. Doesn't show much suddenness, and defensive backs occasionally jump his routes. Lacks initial burst, elusiveness and a second gear after the catch.

Bottom line: Young, who played in a pro-style offense at Illinois, has the ideal size and soft hands of a possession receiver. But he won't outrun NFL defenders like he often did in college, which is why he will likely fall to the fifth or sixth round. **FINAL GRADE: 4.4**

27. Antwone Savage, Oklahoma

6-0 185 4.51 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Justin McCareins, Titans

Strengths: Has adequate size. Is quick and faster than 40-yard time indicates. Shows a second gear in the open field. Is a deep threat. Has great initial quickness and creates separation. Does well at breaking press coverage at the line. Is fluid and has good body control. Always has a feel for where he is. Can track down the ball in the air and catch it over his head. Has good vision and change-of-direction skills as a runner after the catch.

Weaknesses: Is inconsistent catching passes. Loses focus at times and lets balls get into his body too often. Isn't polished in running routes. Rounds off routes at times and doesn't pay great attention to detail. Is inconsistent as a blocker and must improve in that capacity. Had a shoulder injury and off-the-field troubles in his past.

Bottom line: Savage was a productive starter much of his time at Oklahoma. He shows potential as a kickoff returner. He must improve his game in several areas, but he has

late-round value because of his athleticism, experience and versatility. **FINAL GRADE: 4.1**

28. Adrian Madise, TCU

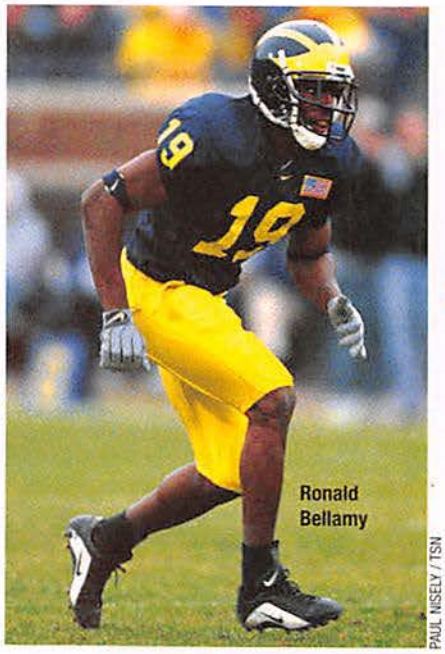
5-10½ 204 4.49 **6th round**

NFL comparison: James McKnight, Dolphins

Strengths: Is strong and well built. Has average height and good speed. Is fearless going over the middle. Shows reliable hands. Can catch on the run and shows flair for acrobatic catches. Adjusts well to the ball in the air. Has a good burst after the catch. Is a big-play threat when he has room to work. Is elusive and shows a second gear in the open field. Is a tough blocker who works to sustain blocks.

Weaknesses: Lacks great height. Was a speed receiver in college, but won't run by NFL defenders nearly as often. Must refine route-running skills. Must show better burst out of breaks and needs to run more consistent routes. Lacks a good feel for zone coverage.

Bottom line: Madise is on the shorter side and needs to develop his technique and route-running skills. But he has the hands, strength, speed and playmaking ability to play in the NFL and warrants a late-round pick. **FINAL GRADE: 3.9**



Ronald Bellamy

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29. Keenan Howry, Oregon

5-10 170 4.52 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Tim Dwight, Chargers

Strengths: Was productive in college as a receiver and punt returner. Excels at using quickness and moves to release from the press. Has great burst in and out of cuts. Sets up defenders in single coverage. Has a good feel for zones. Hands are solid; can catch passes away from his body and on the run. Is at his best when he gets the ball immediately and can create after the catch. Is shifty and elusive in the open field. Has deceptive speed and shows a second gear when he breaks free.

Weaknesses: Measurables significantly limit potential. Lacks height and bulk. Isn't strong and has trouble catching in traffic. Doesn't have elite speed for a punt returner. Won't provide a vertical presence in the NFL like he did in college. Is a small target.

Bottom line: Howry was a better college player than he is an NFL prospect, but he should get consideration late in the draft because of his potential as a slot receiver/return specialist. **FINAL GRADE: 3.8**

30. Dan Stricker, Vanderbilt

6-1⅜ 200 4.55 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Ricky Proehl, Rams

Strengths: Has average height, a good build and decent speed. Runs crisp, smooth routes. Consistently can find soft spots in zones. Sets up defenders. Is fearless over the middle. Does well to break presses at the line. Was productive in college despite drawing much double-team attention. Shows excellent hands. Can catch the ball in traffic, on the run, away from his body and over his head. Is one of the most consistent receivers in this class.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal speed and won't be much of a vertical threat in the NFL. Can't drive defenders off the ball with his initial burst. Has mediocre explosiveness and downfield acceleration. Isn't much of a threat after the catch. Lacks elusiveness and a second gear in the open field. Lacks suddenness when running routes.

Bottom line: Stricker doesn't have great physical skills, but as a natural playmaker who shows great hands, intelligence and consistency, he is a sleeper possession receiver. He could contribute as a No. 3 or No. 4 receiver. **FINAL GRADE: 3.7**

31. Carl Morris, Harvard

6-2⅜ 210 4.63 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Oronde Gadsden, Dolphins

Strengths: Has great size and is well built. Is strong and a big target. Shows excellent hands for a possession receiver. Has a good feel for zone coverage and finds soft spots. Uses his body to shield defenders well. Adjusts to the ball. Is more quick than fast and shows decent lateral movement. Shows soft hands. Can catch on the run, away from his body and in traffic. Is fearless over the middle. Is a sound blocker; uses good size and strength at point of attack.

Weaknesses: Has marginal speed but got away with it at the Division I-AA level. Will struggle to break the press against NFL cornerbacks. Will have much more difficulty gaining separation at the line and out of breaks. Route-running technique needs improvement. Doesn't sink hips when coming in and out of breaks. Gears down when changing directions.

Bottom line: Morris was productive in the Ivy League and is one of the draft's true sleepers. He lacks speed, but he shows plenty of upside because his weaknesses can be corrected with coaching. He will get late-round consideration as a situational possession receiver. **FINAL GRADE: 3.6**

32. Chris Vance, Ohio State

6-0⅝ 180 4.55 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Marvin Minnis, Chiefs

Strengths: Is a vertical playmaker. Is primarily a long strider. Builds speed as he goes. Gets over the top of defensive backs and has outstanding leaping ability. Makes acrobatic catches. Makes many plays on balls in the air. Is elusive after the catch and shows a second gear in the open field.

Weaknesses: Has been inconsistent throughout his career. Must improve route-running skills. Rounds off too many routes. Takes too many plays off. Loses concentration at times and drops catchable balls. Won't show as much vertical speed vs. NFL defensive backs. Must improve defensive recognition.

Bottom line: Vance is an all-or-nothing prospect. He can dazzle with his skills all over the field, but he also disappears at times. He has an upside, but he never has shown consistency, which is why he likely will fall to the last two rounds. **FINAL GRADE: 3.5**

33. Ryan Hoag, Gustavus Adolphus

6-2 189 4.53 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Ron Dixon, Giants

Strengths: Is an exceptional athlete. Has good height and is well built. Is one of the fastest receivers in this class. Has quick feet and shows great burst. Shows decent hands. Can catch in traffic. Developed some crisp route-running ability as a senior. Is a huge threat after the catch and has much potential in the return game.

Weaknesses: Is probably the rawest prospect in the draft. Has a limited football background in Division III. Must work on techniques in every area, including breaking the press, route-running and protecting the ball.

Bottom line: Hoag, a terrific all-around athlete, is the ultimate sleeper. A former soccer player at Wake Forest, he ran track and played football for the Gusties. He is very raw, but he shows great potential as a vertical receiver and return specialist. He likely will be drafted somewhere in the final three rounds. **FINAL GRADE: 3.1**

34. Michael Hayes, Southern University

6-4 214 4.65 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Alex Bannister, Seahawks

Strengths: Is big, tall and strong. Is physical and uses his body well. Has strong hands and can make catches in traffic. Lacks great speed but is a strider who gets downfield and shows a lot of big-play flair. Shows good leaping ability and makes plays with defensive backs all around him. Adjusts well to the ball in the air. Can make acrobatic catches.

Weaknesses: Had season-ending knee surgery in 2001. Has marginal speed and doesn't get deep. Doesn't show much short-area burst or quickness. Struggles to gain separation off the line and out of his breaks. Lacks suddenness on routes. Tends to round off his routes and isn't consistent in that area. Drops too many catchable passes. Tends to lose focus throughout games.

Bottom line: Hayes, who transferred from

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LSU early in his career, rebounded from an ACL tear in 2001 to have a solid second redshirt year at Southern. But his inconsistency, lack of NFL speed and injury history limit him to late-round status. **FINAL GRADE: 2.9**

35. Paul Arnold, Washington

6-0⅜ 203 4.55 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Ron Dugans, Bengals

Strengths: Has good size. Is thick and strong. Uses his natural athleticism and strength to get off the line and uses his body to get position on routes. Has shown better hands and can catch on the run. Is a productive runner after the catch; has good vision, power, elusiveness and a second gear in the open field.

Weaknesses: Durability is a concern. Hasn't been as explosive since he suffered a back injury. Hasn't developed the route-running skills that he should have over time. Doesn't show good technique or the ability to set up defenders. Lacks suddenness in routes and doesn't create enough separation out of breaks. Tends to let balls get into his body too often and drops some catchable passes. Has been unable to raise his game.

Bottom line: Arnold, a converted college running back, moved to receiver in 2001 after a back injury ended his 2000 season. He still is improving at his new position and has some upside as a return specialist. **FINAL GRADE: 2.8**

36. LaTerance Dunbar, TCU

5-9½ 180 4.49 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Drew Haddad, Colts

Strengths: Has explosive initial quickness and good top-end speed. Is quick off the line. Is a threat after the catch. Shows great initial burst if he catches the ball on the run. Has good vision and elusiveness in the open field.

Weaknesses: Is undersized. Lacks great strength and struggles to break the press vs. physical corners. His technique and route-running skills are marginal. Great natural suddenness and explosiveness don't always show up in his routes. Is too mechanical when running routes. Doesn't have a good feel for coverage. Rounds off some routes and hasn't proved he can set up defenders with his burst. Shows inconsistent hands. Struggles to catch on the run. Can get overwhelmed as a blocker.

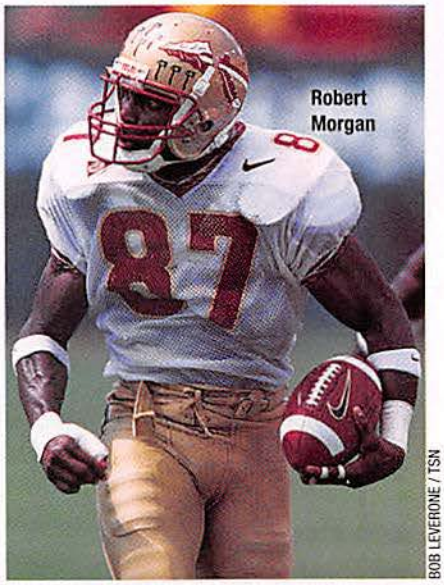
Bottom line: Dunbar, an accomplished college hurdler, is a good athlete who has great track skills. That doesn't always transfer to the football field. He shows some potential as a slot receiver, but for the most part, his skills are unpolished. Because of his speed, athleticism and return potential, Dunbar might be worth a late-round pick, but he could go undrafted. **FINAL GRADE: 2.6**

37. Bethel Johnson, Texas A&M

5-10⅞ 198 4.40 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Alvis Whitted, Raiders

Strengths: Is a skilled athlete and has excellent body control and natural skills. Is very quick and has good speed. Gets open downfield and has some big-play flair. Is acrobatic; can make spectacular catches. Gets off the line with quickness and creates separation if going at full speed.



BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Weaknesses: Never reached potential in college. Missed almost entire 2001 season with a spleen injury. Runs sloppy routes and shows inconsistent hands. Seems lost or bored at times. Doesn't give a complete effort if blocking or a secondary receiver. Doesn't run crisp routes and drops too many passes.

Bottom line: Johnson is an excellent athlete, but he is an underachiever and there is concern about his durability. He will likely fall to the final few rounds if he is drafted at all. **FINAL GRADE: 2.5**

38. Reggie Newhouse, Baylor

6-0½ 189 4.55 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Isaac Byrd, Panthers

Strengths: Has adequate size and great hands. Is consistent in running routes. Has good quickness and burst out of his pedal. Catches balls in traffic. Shows great body control and concentration. Has good leaping ability and consistently catches balls over his head. Is very efficient in the red zone. Wins many battles for balls in the air. Catches balls well on the run. Is a good blocker.

Weaknesses: Lack of big-time speed limits him. Rarely outruns defensive backs. Doesn't get over the top much. Doesn't drive defenders off the ball with his initial burst. Isn't much of a vertical playmaker. Has trouble breaking the press off the line at times. Doesn't do much after the catch. Doesn't work consistently on his blocking.

Bottom line: Newhouse has NFL pedigree—his father, Robert, played for the Cowboys—but the biggest concern about him is his lack of speed. He primarily is a possession receiver and will struggle to get off the line and gain separation in the NFL. He likely will drop to the final two rounds. **FINAL GRADE: 2.3**

39. Robert Morgan, Florida State

5-10¾ 192 4.50 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Andre King, Browns

Strengths: Has adequate size and speed. Shows great hands. Knows how to catch on the run and get upfield quickly. Has an explosive first move after the catch and is an elusive runner. Finds soft spots in zones and runs crisp routes.

Weaknesses: Is adequate in most areas but spectacular in none. Disappears from games at times and tends to lose concentration if he doesn't get the ball enough. Lacks great push off the line and doesn't get over the top of defensive backs. Isn't much of a vertical playmaker and is mediocre getting off the line. Must work on his blocking skills. Had a season-ending knee injury in 2001.

Bottom line: Morgan successfully returned from ACL surgery in 2002, but he doesn't have the same quickness or top-end speed he had before the injury and was limited on the Seminoles' depth chart. He has some potential as a possession-type No. 4 receiver, but his lack of special qualities and his injury history make him a risky pick. **FINAL GRADE: 2.2**

40. Cecil Moore, East Tennessee State

6-2 213 4.60 **7th round**

NFL comparison: D'Wayne Bates, Vikings

Strengths: Has nice height and a thick build. Uses his body well to muscle defensive backs. Has no trouble getting off the line. Is physical in running routes. Uses his body to shield defenders. Shows outstanding hands and great concentration. Can catch the ball away from his body, on the run and in traffic.

Weaknesses: Is somewhat raw in routes. Lacks great speed. Struggles to create separation at times. Isn't quick or explosive. Tends to round off routes and doesn't show ideal burst in and out of his cuts. Will have trouble getting over the top of NFL defensive backs and won't be nearly the vertical playmaker he was at the Division I-AA level.

Bottom line: Moore dominated his level of competition in a run-oriented college offense. A late bloomer, he now shows the size, speed and hands to challenge for a job in the NFL. He is a developmental prospect who still needs polish, but he has the potential to become a reserve possession receiver. Some team is likely to take a late-round chance on him. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 41. Kerry Watkins, Georgia Tech, 5-9⅝, 184, 4.67; (40 time); **42.** Willie Quinnie, UAB, 5-11⅝, 180, 4.50; **43.** Reno Mahe, Brigham Young, 5-10, 180, 4.78; **44.** J.J. McKelvey, Clemson, 6-3, 212, 4.60; **45.** Jerel Myers, LSU, 5-10, 179, 4.49; **46.** Curtis Fagan, Oklahoma, 6-0 ,173, 4.55; **47.** Jamal Burke, Boston College, 6-0⅜, 201, 4.55; **48.** Denero Marriott, Marshall, 6-1, 181, 4.65; **49.** Jerome Riley, Washington State, 6-1, 180, 4.70; **50.** Robert Jacobs, Jackson State, 6-2, 210, 4.69; **51.** Kyle Shanahan, Texas, 6-2, 180, 4.70; **52.** Willie Ponder, Southeast Missouri State, 6-0⅜, 205, 4.51; **53.** Sam Collins, Alabama, 6-0¾, 177, 4.40; **54.** C.J. Jones, Iowa, 5-11, 185, 4.65; **55.** B.J. Lovett, Michigan State, 6-2¾, 209, 4.65; **56.** Ethenic Sands, Miami (Fla.), 5-11,175, 4.65; **57.** David Kircus, 6-1¼, 178, 4.81; **58.** Wilson Thomas, Nebraska, 6-5, 207, 4.75. **59.** Jason Branch, Miami (Ohio), 6-5 216, 4.8.

Tight ends

Had Jeremy Shockey, Jerramy Stevens and Randy McMichael not come out as underclassmen last year, this could have been the strongest class of tight ends ever. Instead, it's just an average class, even with the additions of underclassmen Jason Witten, Dallas Clark, Robert Johnson and George Wrighster.

Witten is the only first-round prospect. He is an excellent receiver and adequate blocker, but he's nowhere near as explosive as Shockey. Neither is Clark, who is more of an H-back than a traditional tight end prospect.

Aaron Walker and Bennie Joppru, the best of the senior tight ends, are pass-catching weapons with below-average blocking skills.

There will be good values on Day 2 because of the depth in this class. Athletic tight ends who can stretch the field vertically are in vogue in the NFL, and Donald Lee, Trent Smith, Wrighster and L.J. Smith all fit that mold as middle-round prospects.

Small-school players Dan Curley, Matt Huebner, Vishante Shanicoe and Steve Farmer are raw but have a lot of upside and could be drafted late as developmental prospects.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Tight ends taken 24	
Round 1	3
Round 2	1
Round 3	2
Round 4	4
Round 5	4
Round 6	6
Round 7	4

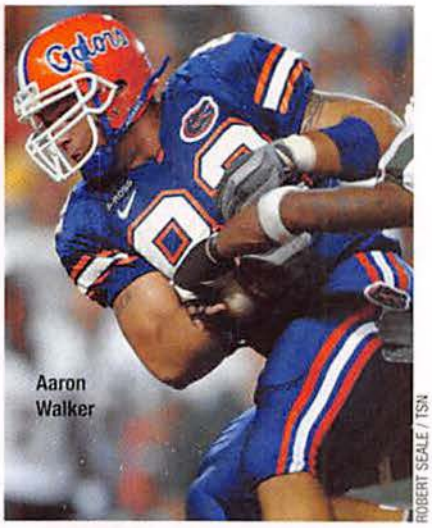
1. Jason Witten, Tennessee*

6-5 265 4.70 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Marcus Pollard, Colts

Hands: By far, the best in the class. Has long arms and soft hands. Has good upper-body flexibility. Looks the ball in and catches it before it gets into his body. Makes catches over the shoulder, on the run and in traffic. **Grade: 8.7**

Patterns: Can split out wide or line up in the slot. Is fluid, smooth and physical. Has above-average speed and works back to the quarterback. Tends to round off a lot of routes. Doesn't use body enough to shield defenders from the ball. Doesn't drive off defenders on short and intermediate routes. **Grade: 8.0**


Aaron Walker

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

Run after catch: Has a good combination of size and speed. Turns upfield immediately. Will lower his shoulder and initiate contact. Is powerful and will run over a lot of defensive backs but is not elusive. Doesn't make defenders miss in the open field. Will power ahead for yards but not a threat to weave his way down the field. **Grade: 8.2**

Release: Comes out of set with good leverage. Has above-average initial quickness. Does decent job of using hands to maintain separation. Is strong enough to avoid jams and quick enough to get a clean release against most strongside linebackers. **Grade: 8.0**

Blocking: Has good size and continues to get stronger. Is athletic and able to reach second level and block moving targets. Has adequate pop but struggles to hold his ground at the point of attack. Needs to improve technique and lower-body strength. **Grade: 7.6**

Bottom line: Witten has a good combination of size, strength, athleticism, blocking skills and hands. He needs to improve his blocking and route-running skills, but those areas can be improved with better coaching and improved focus in the weight room. Has a chance to become a consistent and dangerous receiver and an efficient blocker.

FINAL GRADE: 8.1

2. Dallas Clark, Iowa*

6-4 245 4.70 2nd round

NFL comparison: Frank Wycheck, Titans

Hands: Has long arms and soft hands. Shows terrific concentration. Consistently catches passes away from his body and on the run. Makes catches over the shoulder and in traffic. **Grade: 8.4**

Patterns: Is quick off the line. Makes sudden, sharp cuts. Runs crisp routes and finds soft spots in zones. Has the acceleration and speed to stretch defenses. Needs to learn to use his body to drive off defenders and shield them from the ball. Needs to become stronger and more physical on intermediate routes. **Grade: 8.1**

Run after catch: Excels at catching passes on the run and getting upfield immediately. Has good burst after the catch. Has adequate straight-line speed and above-average elusiveness. **Grade: 8.0**

Release: Comes out of stance with good quickness and leverage. Has good speed and initial burst. Shows some "swim" and "rip" moves to get a clean release but can get frustrated at the line. Is lean and lacks great strength. Struggles to gain separation if jammed by big, physical linebackers. Might

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-6	260	4.60
NFL minimum	6-2	235	5.00

The ideal tight end has the strength and size to open holes in the running game and the hands and speed to be a reliable receiving threat. However, those players are rare. As a result, the trend has shifted to drafting athletic tight ends, such as Todd Heap and Jeremy Shockey, who have the speed to create mismatches against linebackers and the size and leaping ability to beat defensive backs down the field.

ON THE RISE: Bennie Joppru, Michigan
Has added more than 15 pounds since his junior season. Was one of nation's most consistent receivers in 2002.

ON THE DECLINE: Mike Pinkard, Arizona State
There was a lot of hype before his senior season, but he caught just 30 passes and hasn't developed physically.

SLEEPER: Matt Huebner, St. Cloud State
This Division II product needs polish, but he has the size as a blocker and the hands as a receiver.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Robert Johnson, Auburn
Has terrific physical skills, but durability has been a problem and production never has matched talent.

BIGGEST RISK: Donald Lee, Mississippi State
Had impressive practices before all-star games, but he's built more like a wide receiver, and his hands are shaky.

BEST HANDS: Trent Smith, Oklahoma
He lacks NFL size and speed, but he was a go-to-guy in the clutch throughout his college career.

BIGGEST DEEP THREAT: George Wrighster, Oregon
He averaged 13.9 yards per catch in 2002, with a long of 50 yards, and scored six touchdowns.

MOST DANGEROUS AFTER CATCH: Dallas Clark, Iowa
He doesn't have elite speed, but his run-after-catch skills led to a 16.5 yards-per-catch average in 2002.

BEST OVERALL RECEIVER: Jason Witten, Tennessee
A big target with soft hands, he has the speed to stretch the seam and power and quickness after the catch.

MOST DOMINANT BLOCKER: Aaron Golliday, Nebraska
Basically an extra lineman in a power-option running attack, his best chance to play in NFL may be at tackle.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

have to be used more in slot and in motion in the NFL. **Grade: 7.2**

Blocking: Is competitive and works to get in position. Is a good athlete who reaches the second level and hits moving targets. Shows good balance and quickness as an open-field blocker. Drives legs and stays with his assignment. Biggest NFL challenge will be in-line blocking. Lacks lower-body strength and is frequently overmatched at the point of attack. **Grade: 7.0**

Bottom line: Clark, a walk-on linebacker in 1998, moved to tight end in 2001. He doesn't have great size and will have trouble blocking in the NFL, but he runs terrific routes, has outstanding hands and should contribute right away as at least an H-back type on passing downs. His quickness and pass-catching ability make Clark an attractive prospect, but he must add bulk and strength to be an every-down tight end. **FINAL GRADE: 7.7**

3. Aaron Walker, Florida

6-5⅛ 253 4.68 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Chad Lewis, Eagles

Strengths: Has nice combination of size, athleticism, quickness and hands. Is a big target with good strength and bulk. Will use body to shield defenders. Has the size to overpower linebackers in coverage and the speed to stretch the seam. Shows the ability to catch on the run and over his head. Has good size and strength as a blocker. Could develop into a solid in-line blocker in the NFL.

Weaknesses: Did not get a lot of experience as a blocker in Florida's offense. Needs to improve technique and leverage as a blocker. Doesn't take great angles. Gets too high at the point of attack at times. Doesn't sustain his blocks all the time. As a receiver, he needs to become better at finding soft spots in zones. Doesn't show a great understanding of coverages.

Bottom line: Walker is an underrated prospect who was a full-time starter the past two seasons. He still has work to do in terms of improving his overall awareness, route-running skills and leverage as a blocker. But Walker still has room to add bulk and strength to his frame. He should be one of the top five tight ends drafted. **FINAL GRADE: 6.9**

4. Bennie Joppru, Michigan

6-3½ 259 4.76 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Jay Riemersma, Bills

Strengths: Has good athleticism and adequate speed for the position. Shows good burst off line. Does nice job of getting into his routes and shows ability to stretch the seam. Runs crisp routes. Has exceptional hands. Is able to catch on the run and away from his body. Showed improved knowledge of zone coverages last season. Is an adequate open-field blocker.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal height and may not be more than an H-back in the NFL. Also lacks ideal strength as an in-line blocker. Has trouble anchoring against defensive ends or outside linebackers at the point of attack. Lacks the base to drive the pile in the running game. Needs to be on the move to be an effective blocker.

Bottom line: Joppru probably was the most improved tight end in this class last season, but he still has size and strength limitations. He may never be more than an H-back or situational pass-catching tight end in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 6.7**

5. Robert Johnson, Auburn*

6-6 270 4.78 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Rickey Dudley, Buccaneers

Strengths: Is a physical route runner and a big target. Uses body to shield defenders from the ball. Is at his best in the middle of field and on crossing routes, finding soft spots in zones. Shows flashes of developing good hands. Catches passes away from his body and over his shoulder. Snatches passes on the run. Wide wingspan allows him to make tough catches. Is surprisingly agile and elusive after the catch. Is tough to tackle because of quickness, size and strength. Can maintain separation with long arms and strong upper body. Shows good lateral movement as an in-line blocker and is athletic enough to make blocks in the open field.

PETER NEWCOMB FOR TSN

Weaknesses: Leverage is a problem in every aspect of his game, especially as a blocker and on his release. Should be a better blocker. Lacks a mean streak. Doesn't always take good angles to blocks. Looks lost at times blocking in the open field. Plays too high at times and lacks lower-body strength to hold his ground at the point of attack. Drops too many catchable balls. Doesn't run sudden, crisp routes.

Bottom line: Johnson should be more productive in the passing game and a more effective in-line blocker. He has the potential to develop into a quality NFL starter, but he is a risky Day 1 pick because of his inconsistency. **FINAL GRADE: 6.4**

6. Spencer Nead, Brigham Young

6-4 270 4.80 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Anthony Becht, Jets

Strengths: Has great size and adequate speed. Is a good athlete for his size and has a lot of upside as a receiver. Is a big target and uses his body to shield defenders. Has soft, reliable hands and catches most passes near his body. Is tough to bring down once he gets going after the catch. Is strong at the point of attack as a blocker. Has quick feet and can hit moving targets in the open field. Has strong legs and can drive through run blocks.

Weaknesses: Is somewhat raw as a blocker and receiver. Needs to take better angles on his blocks. Can look lost trying to find open-field assignments. Doesn't always play with great leverage and loses size advantage too often because of it. Needs to come out of his stance lower and show better moves to slip press coverage. Runs adequate routes but

SPOTLIGHT

Trent Smith
Oklahoma

Several tight ends drafted in the past two years have become immediate impact players. Leading the pack are two of the league's youngest Pro Bowl selections, the Ravens' Todd Heap (31st overall pick in 2001) and the Giants' Jeremy Shockey (14th overall in '02).

Trent Smith's lack of size and strength likely will prevent him from making as great an impact, but an AFC scout likens Smith's speedy playmaking skills to those of Heap and Shockey. "He has the best hands I've seen. He is very fluid coming off the line."

Smith's athleticism made him a versatile cog in Oklahoma's offense. Some of his biggest games, including an 11-catch, four-touchdown game against Kansas in 2001, came when he frequently was used as a slot receiver.

"He just gets into so many physical mismatches," says former Sooners tight ends/special teams coach Jonathan Hayes, now tight ends coach for the Bengals. "He has too much speed for linebackers and too much size for cornerbacks."

Hayes says Smith's great hands and technique also were keys to the Sooners' running game. "Because of how good a receiver he is, sometimes it's taken for granted that's he's a great blocker at the point of attack."

Hayes, himself an NFL tight end for 12 seasons, says what's expected out of the position hasn't changed, but that it has become more specialized. That specialization has made room for both athletic and lineman-like tight ends.

"It's a very situational game now," Hayes says. "Teams are still looking for the complete package. It's just harder to find someone who does both well—pass receiving and blocking."

Hayes says regardless of position, there is one thing young players must keep in mind in the NFL: "You have to play hard on every play, taking each one like it's your last play. Trent already does that. He is always looking for the big play to set him apart. He wants the ball in crunch time."

Off the field, Smith matches that competitiveness—he has a black belt in tae kwon do and shows the flexibility necessary for martial arts on the field.

"Each time you see him, he shows more potential," the AFC scout says of Smith. "He will present some problems for defenses in the NFL." —*Vinnie Iyer*

doesn't have great feel for zones and isn't a big threat to stretch the seam. Doesn't catch as well on the run or over his shoulder.
Bottom line: Nead, whose college career was interrupted by a religious mission, will be a 25-year-old rookie. He doesn't have great speed, but he is a big target and has the frame to eventually develop into an efficient in-line blocker. His value has improved because of a strong senior season.
FINAL GRADE: 5.9

7. Donald Lee, Mississippi State

6-2⅞ 238 4.72 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Christian Fauria, Patriots
Strengths: Is a good athlete with above-average speed. Shows some ability to stretch the field. Can adjust to the ball and catch it over his shoulder. Has good quickness off the line. Has body control and shows good burst in and out of cuts. Is quick after the catch and runs better than 40-yard time would indicate. Is a hard-working blocker who fights to make up for his lack of size. Will take good angles to open-field blocks and will fight to the finish.
Weaknesses: Is undersized and may never be a full-time tight end in the NFL. Has marginal bulk and base as a blocker. Is a better blocker than size indicates but will have trouble matching up in-line and will struggle at the point of attack. Drops some catchable balls. Double-catches a lot of passes. Needs to run more polished routes and concentrate better as a receiver.
Bottom line: Lee is a wide receiver stuck in a tight end's body. He has been extremely durable, never missing a game in his career because of injury. His speed is better than advertised and he's a fluid all-around athlete, but he's not going to be a traditional tight end in the NFL. He likely will fall to Day 2 in the draft because he lacks the size and strength of an every-down tight end and doesn't have elite speed or hands.
FINAL GRADE: 5.7

8. Mike Pinkard, Arizona State

6-5⅛ 251 4.69 **4th round**
NFL comparison: David Sloan, Saints
Strengths: Has an outstanding combination of size and speed. Is a fluid athlete for his size. Is a big target. Can stretch the seam. Has good burst and is tough to bring down after the catch. Turns great natural size into a blocking strength. Has lower-body strength to develop into a solid in-line blocker.
Weaknesses: Is inexperienced and has been inconsistent. Must improve blocking technique. Takes poor angles at times and doesn't always play with leverage. Tends to disappear as a receiver. Has some trouble releasing from the line. Tends to round off some of his routes. Lacks great suddenness and hasn't shown a good feel for finding soft spots in zones. Doesn't consistently create separation.
Bottom line: Pinkard, a converted defensive end, has some upside if he is willing to work at his game. He has the ideal physical package and will continue to become a better receiver with experience, which makes him worthy of a late first-day or early second-day pick. **FINAL GRADE: 5.6**

9. Trent Smith, Oklahoma

6-4⅞ 232 4.70 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Eric Johnson, 49ers
Strengths: Is a consistent, reliable receiver. Has good initial quickness. Uses his agility well; gets off the line and into routes by avoiding contact. Shows quick feet. Recognition skills have improved. Finds soft spots in zones. Has the speed to stretch the field. Shows good hands and excels at looking in balls. Gets upfield immediately after catch and is tough to take down.
Weaknesses: Lacks size and strength. Will be an in-line blocking liability in NFL. Lacks lower-body strength and the base to anchor. Has trouble matching up at the point of attack. Isn't physical or aggressive enough as a blocker.
Bottom line: Smith was a productive receiver in college, but he was basically a big wideout. He would fit as an H-back or pass-catching tight end in a West Coast system. Because he isn't much of a blocker, he likely will drop to the fourth round. **FINAL GRADE: 5.4**

10. Mike Seidman, UCLA

6-4 268 4.80 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Kyle Brady, Jaguars
Strengths: Has good size and is an efficient blocker. Doesn't make many mental mistakes. Takes good angles. Footwork is sound. Uses adequate size to get in good position. Usually finishes blocks. Is a consistent short-to-intermediate receiver. Shows reliable hands. Releases from the line well and adjusts to the ball.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal speed and isn't a big playmaking receiver. Shows little downfield burst. Has trouble gaining separation on routes. Is tough to bring down after the catch but lacks acceleration and elusiveness. Rarely overpowers opponents as a blocker and has trouble uprooting bigger linemen.
Bottom line: Seidman has good mid-round to late-round value because of his durability, consistency, intelligence, versatility and experience. He doesn't dazzle in any one area, but he is solid in many. **FINAL GRADE: 5.2**

11. George Wrighster, Oregon*

6-2¾ 250 4.70 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Stephen Alexander, Chargers
Strengths: Has good initial quickness. Shows a feel for zone coverage. Bursts out of breaks to gain separation. Can catch away from his body. Shows good concentration. Makes acrobatic catches other tight ends can't. Adjusts routes to thrown balls and consistently makes catches on the run. Doesn't make many defenders miss but is a strong runner. Gets immediately upfield after the catch. Blocks with good leverage. Gets good positioning on his blocks, works to lock on to defenders, drives legs and sticks with them. Is an adequate open-field blocker.
Weaknesses: Lacks bulk and height. Lacks great pop and will have problems against NFL defensive ends and outside linebackers. Gets overwhelmed at point of attack. Lacks the size to match up inside. Has some trouble getting off the line as a receiver.
Bottom line: Wrighster has the potential to develop into a consistent receiver, but he may be nothing more than a role-playing No. 2 tight end or H-back. **FINAL GRADE: 5.0**

12. L.J. Smith, Rutgers

6-3½ 253 4.62 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Randy McMichael, Dolphins
Strengths: Is a reliable target. Gets off the line well and into his routes. Knows how to read defenses. Finds soft spots in zones. Shows great hands and concentration. Can catch the ball away from his frame and on the run. Is tough to bring down after the catch. Is an adequate position blocker. Excels at hitting moving targets in the open field.
Weaknesses: Is undersized. Lacks base and lower-body strength to hold up as an in-line blocker in the NFL. Has marginal initial pop and lacks the bulk to sustain blocks. Will need to play more of an H-back role if he doesn't add bulk. Lacks ideal straight-line speed for a pass-catching tight end. Route-running skills need much improvement.
Bottom line: Smith's receiving skills make him an attractive mid-round pick. He should develop into a good No. 2 tight end.
FINAL GRADE: 4.8

13. Zach Hilton, North Carolina

6-6⅞ 255 4.73 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Darnell Sanders, Browns
Strengths: Has great measurables, especially size and speed. Has big hands and continues to show improvement as a receiver. Is a big target who excels in the short area. Can catch on the run. Uses body well to shield defenders. Shows much potential as a blocker.
Weaknesses: Is still raw, especially as a blocker. Loses leverage and at times has trouble getting off the line as a receiver because he's too upright. Is getting stronger, but initial pop and power are mediocre. Sometimes looks awkward running routes. Isn't smooth in and out of breaks. Lacks great speed. Doesn't stretch the field much. Has some trouble catching over his head and occasionally struggles to adjust to the ball in the air. Lacks suddenness out of cuts.
Bottom line: Hilton is a late bloomer who runs well for his size and can still add bulk. His overall value has steadily increased enough to warrant a fourth- or fifth-round pick. **FINAL GRADE: 4.5**

14. Doug Zeigler, Mississippi

6-3⅛ 252 4.68 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Roland Williams, Raiders
Strengths: Has great quickness and athleticism. Has a good feel for the passing game and reading coverages. Can find soft spots in zones. Gets off the line well. Has the straight-line speed to stretch the seam. Shows solid and reliable hands. Can catch over his shoulder, away from his body and on the run. Is a good leaper; wins many jump balls. Needs to improve as a blocker. Is taking better angles

and has learned to use position and leverage to make up for a lack of strength at the point of attack. Is an average open-field blocker.
Weaknesses: Durability is a big concern. In addition to breaking a leg as a senior, he also missed time the past three years with hamstring, ankle and forearm injuries. Lacks ideal height. Isn't a strong blocker.
Bottom line: Zeigler likely was a Day 1 selection before a broken leg ended his senior season early. He could develop into a solid receiver as an H-back or in a West Coast offense. **FINAL GRADE: 4.0**

15. Kevin Ware, Washington

6-2½ 253 4.81 6th round
NFL comparison: Dwayne Carswell, Broncos
Strengths: Has good quickness and athleticism. Gets off the line well and finds holes in zone coverage. Catches the ball within his frame. Is a load to bring down in the open field. Has great bulk and good strength. Is strong at the point of attack as a blocker. Excels at driving legs and sustaining blocks.
Weaknesses: Is undersized and lacks the speed to stretch the field. Runs sloppy routes. Has trouble adjusting to balls thrown away from him. Loses focus at times and drops catchable passes. Shows inconsistent technique as a blocker.
Bottom line: Ware has some value as a possible No. 2 tight end and is versatile enough to fill-in as a short-term starter, but his physical limitations may keep from developing into a starter. **FINAL GRADE: 3.7**

16. Dan Curley, Eastern Washington

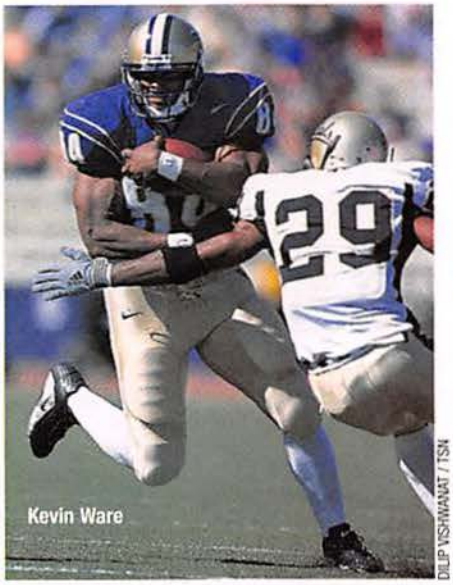
6-4⅛ 232 4.59 6th round
NFL comparison: Jed Weaver, Dolphins
Strengths: Is athletic. Has good initial quickness. Adjusts to the ball well. Has big, soft hands. Can catch on the run. Is a tough, aggressive blocker at the point of attack. Can hit moving targets and sustains blocks once he locks on.
Weaknesses: Is still working to get back to ideal size and strength after having an infection. Isn't a great in-line blocker. Has only average speed. Isn't much of a threat to stretch the field. Will have more trouble getting off the line and downfield in the NFL.
Bottom line: Even if Curley stays healthy and keeps his weight up, he probably won't be more than a situational, pass-catching No. 2 tight end. **FINAL GRADE: 3.4**

17. Matt Huebner, St. Cloud State

6-3½ 271 4.87 6th round
NFL comparison: Steve Heiden, Browns
Strengths: Has great size. Is faster than 40 time indicates. Adjusts well to the ball in the air. Is a consistent short-to-intermediate receiver. Shows big and soft hands. Has good size as a blocker and has improved in that capacity. If he plays with leverage, he can engulf defensive ends at the point of attack.
Weaknesses: Lacks good speed. Needs to show better footwork and more consistent leverage as a blocker. Route-running skills need polishing. Has some trouble getting clean releases from the line.
Bottom line: Huebner could be the sleeper of this class because of the room he has to improve. **FINAL GRADE: 3.2**

18. Vishante Shiancoe, Morgan State

6-3⅝ 249 4.62 6th round
NFL comparison: Jerame Tuman, Steelers
Strengths: Has a good combination of size and speed. Runs smooth routes and adjusts well to the ball in the air. Shows good concentration and soft hands. Can catch on the run and away from his body. Has improved strength. Has developed into an efficient open-field blocker. Can hit moving targets and sustain blocks.
Weaknesses: Doesn't have ideal bulk or strength. Will have a tough time matching up as an in-line blocker at the point of attack. Lacks lower-body strength and an anchoring base. Struggles at times to get clean releases as a receiver and has trouble creating separation.
Bottom line: Shiancoe should continue to improve and could make an NFL roster as a pass-catching reserve, but he probably won't ever be an in-line blocker.
FINAL GRADE: 2.9


Kevin Ware
DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

19. Lorenzo Diamond, Auburn

6-3 250 4.85 7th round
NFL comparison: Jermaine Wiggins, Panthers
Strengths: Is a technically sound blocker who takes good angles. Is tough and tenacious. Works to finish blocks and is a fist fighter. Has good size. Shows nice hands. Is a reliable short-area receiver. Is consistent in running routes. Gets upfield immediately and is a strong open-field runner.
Weaknesses: Lacks elite size, speed, receiving skills and blocking strength. Has some trouble getting off the line as a receiver. Struggles to make catches over his head. Doesn't stretch the seam. Lacks ideal base as a blocker. Rarely overpowers opponents.
Bottom line: Diamond is efficient, hustles on every play and has good technique, but he lacks an upside and won't be anything more than a reliable short-yardage receiver.
FINAL GRADE: 2.7

20. Gabriel Reid, Brigham Young

6-2½ 250 4.85 7th round
NFL comparison: Dave Moore, Bills
Strengths: Has adequate bulk and good weight-room strength. Plays with leverage and shows good footwork and technique as a blocker. Has soft hands and is a reliable short-to-intermediate receiver. Can catch on the run. Adjusts well to poorly thrown balls.
Weaknesses: Will be 26 in May and was only a No. 2 tight end in college. Lacks both height and bulk. Has a marginal base and struggles to hold his ground at the point of attack. Lacks the speed to stretch the field and the suddenness to gain separation.
Bottom line: Despite limited playing experience, Reid has made good progress and could develop into a reliable backup tight end. **FINAL GRADE: 2.6**

21. Michael Gaines, Central Florida

6-3½ 2.80 4.80 7th round
NFL comparison: Hunter Goodwin, Vikings
Strengths: Has good size and strength. Shows good initial pop as a blocker. Has the lower-body strength to control defenders at the point of attack when playing with leverage. Has good hands and can catch on the run.
Weaknesses: Takes poor angles into blocks and at times gets overextended and lunges in the open field. Is nothing more than a short-area receiver with marginal speed.
Bottom line: Gaines is basically an extra offensive tackle who could develop into a blocking specialist. **FINAL GRADE: 2.4**

22. Sean Berton, N.C. State

6-3⅞ 260 4.90 7th round
NFL comparison: Itula Mili, Seahawks
Strengths: Has good size. Bends knees well to block with leverage. Has good footwork and takes solid angles into blocks. Has soft hands and is a reliable short-to-intermediate receiver. Shows good feel for zone coverage. Has improved his route-running skills.
Weaknesses: Lacks experience, strength as a blocker and straight-line speed. Doesn't stretch the field. Will struggle to gain separation in the NFL.
Bottom line: Berton is the classic late bloomer who may have a surprising upside for a late-round pick. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 23. Aaron Golliday, Nebraska, 6-3¾, 287, 5.09 (40 time); **24.** Mobolaji Afariogun, Western Michigan, 6-3⅝, 230, 4.85; **25.** Steve Farmer, Tennessee State, 6-3¾, 252, 4.85; **26.** Erick Streelman, Nevada, 6-4, 250, 4.85; **27.** Ray Thomas, Wake Forest, 6-4¼, 245, 4.70; **28.** R.J. Luke, Western Illinois, 6-3, 247, 4.80; **29.** Casey Fitzsimmons, Carroll College (Mont.), 6-2¾, 248, 4.90; **30.** Chad Bartoszek, Buffalo, 6-6⅛, 255, 4.84; **31.** Ben Unutoa, Kentucky State, 6-4⅝, 281, 5.23; **32.** Theo Sanders, Alabama, 6-2¼, 243, 4.83; **33.** Phil Condon, Grand Valley State, 6-3⅞, 244, 4.85; **34.** Chase Harp, Kentucky, 6-3, 247, 4.80; **35.** DeJhown Mandley, UNLV, 6-3, 235, 5.09; **36.** Casey Poppinga, Utah State, 6-4⅝, 256, 4.80.

Offensive tackles

This is a depressing class for those NFL teams that need help at offensive tackle. Jordan Gross, Kwame Harris and George Foster are the only first-round prospects.

Gross is everyone's favorite because he has the size, balance and strength to be an NFL left tackle, but he wasn't tested much in the Mountain West Conference and scouts were disappointed that he didn't play in any all-star games. Harris has no exceptional skills, and Foster missed most of his senior season because of a wrist injury he suffered in a preseason car accident.

After those three, there's a huge drop-off in talent. Brett Williams, Ben Johnson, Tony Pashos and Steve Sciullo are marginal athletes and overrated right tackle prospects who will struggle to protect quarterbacks in the NFL. Jon Stinchcomb has the feet and agility in pass protection to develop into the best of the second- and third-round prospects, but he will need to add weight in order to hold up physically.

Wayne Hunter and Wade Smith could be diamonds in the rough. Hunter has played only one season at offensive tackle after moving from defensive tackle, but he displays the feet and power of an NFL left tackle. Smith also has limited experience at tackle—he played two seasons at tight end—but he reminds us of John Fina when Fina was a draft prospect.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Offensive tackles taken 16	
Round 1	4
Round 2	3
Round 3	1
Round 4	0
Round 5	1
Round 6	3
Round 7	4

Ben Johnson

DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

1. Jordan Gross, Utah

6-4⅝ 300 5.08 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Tony Boselli, Texans

Run blocking: Has adequate size and shows good power and pop. Rarely blows assignments. Consistently takes great angles and proper first steps. Plays with excellent leverage. Has explosive power from hips and a strong upper body. Isn't overwhelming at the point of attack but plays with a mean streak and always is in position. Consistently reaches linebackers and hits moving targets. **Grade: 8.8**

Pass blocking: Has excellent footwork. Lacks elite quickness and will have some trouble against top NFL speed rushers but shows adequate athleticism and balance. Can redirect and mirror-and-slide against double moves. Bends knees well to stay balanced. Packs a powerful punch and keeps good separation with long arms. Shows lower-body strength and leverage to anchor against bull rushes. **Grade: 8.6**

Initial quickness: Stands out in this area. Is quick out of his stance and wins most battles within the first three steps. Explodes with good leverage as a run blocker. Sets well in pass protection and stays balanced. **Grade: 8.8**

Strength: Isn't a massive mauler; doesn't overwhelm defenders with his size. Has a strong upper body and gets good hand placement. Hips are explosive. Excels at driving legs as a run blocker. **Grade: 8.6**

Mobility: Has great short-area quickness. Gets past the line and stays balanced while blocking in the open field. Lack of fast footwork could cause him some problems as a pro. **Grade: 8.6**

Bottom line: Gross is a dominating blocker when he locks on. He squats 550 pounds and bench-presses 395. A tae kwon do black belt, he also shows ideal balance, coordination and hands. Thanks to a strong senior year, he has emerged as the top prospect at this position. **FINAL GRADE: 8.7**

2. Kwame Harris, Stanford*

6-7 310 5.18 1st round

NFL comparison: Jon Jansen, Redskins

Run blocking: Has terrific size and long arms. Isn't the best athlete but moves well in the short area and plays with excellent balance. Takes good angles into blocks. Has good upper-body strength and works to sustain run blocks. Overpowers smaller speed rushers at the point of attack. Should only get better as leverage and strength improve. **Grade: 8.6**

Pass blocking: Has a quick set and plays with balance. Doesn't overextend much and can slide laterally. Has struggled at times against top speed rushers but usually is quick enough in his set and has a long enough

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-6	325	5.00
NFL minimum	6-3	290	5.30

Left and right tackles rarely share similar skills. The left tackle protects the quarterback's blind side (unless the quarterback is lefthanded). He must have the athletic ability and quickness to handle speed coming off the edge and the base to anchor against the bull rush. The right tackle usually is massive and must have an explosive first step and leg drive to get movement in the running game.

ON THE RISE: Wayne Hunter, Hawaii
Scouts are enamored with his athleticism and pass-pro skills even though he has played just one year on offense.

ON THE DECLINE: Tony Pashos, Illinois
There are mixed opinions on Pashos. Ours is that he plays like he's on stilts and lacks a mean streak.

SLEEPER: Garry Johnson, Arkansas State
His head coach, Joe Hollis, an ex-Ohio State assistant, says Johnson is in the same class as Orlando Pace.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Damian Lavergne, La. Tech
He has talent, but his unwillingness to work at his game, on and off the field, has led to an underachieving career.

BIGGEST RISK: George Foster, Georgia
Injuries limited him to one start as a senior and just 11 starts his entire collegiate career.

BEST PASS BLOCKER: Jon Stinchcomb, Georgia
He is an experienced, athletic and technically sound blocker who rarely lets his man get to the quarterback.

BEST RUN BLOCKER: Ben Johnson, Wisconsin
The Badgers had a 1,000-yard rusher each of the three seasons he started.

MOST ATHLETIC: Wade Smith, Memphis
He needs to bulk up and hit the weight room, but how many offensive tackles run a sub-5.0 in the 40?

STRONGEST IN WEIGHT ROOM: Brett Williams, FSU
He lacks athleticism, but he's a terror in the weight room and put the shot more than 60 feet in high school.

MOST VERSATILE: Jordan Gross, Utah
The best overall prospect at the position, he played both tackle spots and both guard spots during college.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

body to force wide arcs. Needs to play with more consistent leverage but bends knees well to anchor against bull rushes. Excels at keeping separation with his long arms. Has strong hands and controls the point of attack once locked on. **Grade: 8.2**

Initial quickness: Is athletically gifted and moves well for his size. Shows good burst out of his set and takes great angles in run blocking. Has trouble against elite speed rushers but usually shows a quick set in pass protection and stays under control. **Grade: 8.3**

Strength: Has an impressive frame and good strength. Shows solid lower-body strength and drives on run blocks. When playing with leverage, he anchors well. Has powerful arms and hands. Rarely loses one-on-one matchups when locked on. Has good initial pop and excels at controlling the point of attack with his upper body. **Grade: 8.5**

Mobility: Shows good initial quickness. Has decent speed and hustles well. Works to get out on linebackers and takes good angles. Must improve his leverage; runs too upright and loses point-of-attack power when trying to hit moving targets. **Grade: 8.2**

Bottom line: In addition to his physical skills, Harris offers great intangibles. He should step in and start immediately on the right side of an NFL line. **FINAL GRADE: 8.4**

3. George Foster, Georgia

6-4⅝ 317 5.23 1st round

NFL comparison: Walter Jones, Seahawks

Run blocking: Has excellent size and strength. Shows good initial pop and upper-body power. Has the wingspan and overall size to engulf defenders at the point of attack. Shows quick feet. Can reach out on linebackers and is athletic. Must learn to play with better knee bend and leverage. Plays too upright and loses power. Overextends and lunges at times. Lacks great hip explosion and fails to drive through blocks. Needs to take better angles and be more consistent with first steps. **Grade: 8.2**

Pass blocking: Has a quick set. Shows the feet to mirror and slide. Has long arms and a strong hand punch and keeps great separation. Controls most one-on-one matchups when locked on. Must improve technique. Loses leverage too often and gets off balance. **Grade: 7.8**

Initial quickness: Is a good athlete who shows some burst out of stance, but he comes out too high at times and doesn't always take great angles with his first steps. **Grade: 7.8**

Strength: Can overpower defenders at the point of attack. Has a wide base and strong legs. Has some upper-body explosion with long, strong arms and strong hands. Lacks great hip explosion. Could be more powerful with better knee bend and leverage. **Grade: 8.3**

Mobility: Is surprisingly mobile as an open-field blocker. Has adequate footwork and shows good quickness in run blocking. Can redirect and slide feet in pass protection. Must learn to play under control and not get off-balance in space. **Grade: 7.8**

Bottom line: Foster can play left and right tackle, but he is a risk because of his college injury history (ankle, wrist) and subsequent lack of experience. He may need a full year as an NFL backup before contributing. **FINAL GRADE: 8.0**

4. Brett Williams, Florida State

6-5 312 5.20 2nd round

NFL comparison: Solomon Page, Cowboys

Run blocking: Has good height and adequate size. Shows explosive upper-body strength. Is a tactician. Excels with first steps. Takes good angles into blocks. Plays with a mean streak. Has good hand placement and drives legs to finish blocks. Isn't massive and doesn't overpower many defenders. Is stiff at times. Lacks great hip explosion; is more of a position-and-punch blocker. **Grade: 7.8**

Pass blocking: Has a great wingspan. Forces defensive ends to take wide arcs. Has good initial pop and knocks ends off their feet. Plays under control but lacks ideal footwork. Struggles at times against speed rushers. Loses some battles off the edge. **Grade: 7.5**

Initial quickness: Feet are heavy. Struggles at times to get out of his stance with quickness and burst. Lacks great athleticism. **Grade: 6.8**

Strength: Is much stronger in his upper body than lower body. Has strong arms and hands. Controls defenders at the point of attack with punch and hand position. Lacks explosive hips. Doesn't overwhelm with his size. Base is average. **Grade: 7.5**

Mobility: Lacks ideal footwork and change-of-direction skills for a possible Day 1 tackle. Looks a bit sluggish and stiff at times. **Grade: 7.0**

Bottom line: Williams was an efficient left tackle in college but will need to move to right tackle or guard in the NFL. His durability (knees) is a concern. **FINAL GRADE: 7.3**

5. Jon Stinchcomb, Georgia

6-4⅝ 302 5.06 2nd round

NFL comparison: Derrick Deese, 49ers

Run blocking: Is primarily a positional and wall-off blocker. Shows quick feet. Is a tactician; takes good angles and shows good hand placement. Has a strong upper body but lacks ideal size, bulk and explosiveness. Struggles to drive defenders off the line. Isn't overwhelming at the point of attack. Gets in trouble if he isn't in position and bending his knees. **Grade: 6.5**

Pass blocking: Has great experience. Shows excellent technique. Bends knees well and plays with nice leverage. Stays balanced. Has a quick set. Uses long arms to force wide arcs and displays the consistent footwork to mirror and slide with elite edge rushers. Has only a marginal base. Struggles to anchor against top bull rushers. **Grade: 7.7**

Initial quickness: Shows quick feet and consistently takes good angles with first steps.

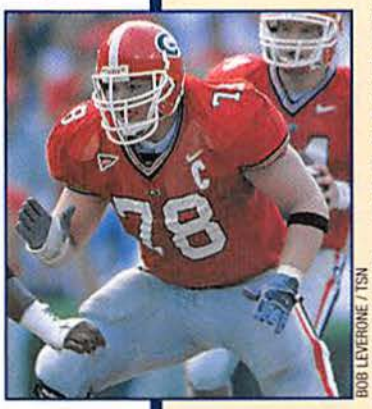
SPOTLIGHT

Jon Stinchcomb
Georgia

In Jon Stinchcomb's world, respect matters. Ask him a question, and he'll answer it with a "Yes, sir" or "No, sir."

Sneeze, and Stinchcomb will offer a "bless you." He also opens doors for ladies, doesn't chew with his mouth full and attends church each Sunday. "His family did a great job raising him," says Packers director of college scouting John Dorsey.

But it's Stinchcomb's on-field skills that have NFL scouts excited. His pass blocking is more refined than many of his peers' because he played in coach Mark Richt's scheme at Georgia. The Bulldogs ran a wide-open attack that spread opponents across the field, often leaving Stinchcomb with lots of space to cover when left unprotected by a tight end. More times than not, Stinchcomb delivered—but he's not perfect.


BOB LEVERONE / TSN

"One area he has to improve at is playing more consistently with his pads lower," Dorsey says. "But he has demonstrated that he's a good learner who started for four years at a big-time program against big-time opposition."

In addition to playing lower, Stinchcomb must get heavier, though he has pushed his weight above 300 pounds, to 302, since the end of last season. He's light on his feet and is able to pop out of his stance, quickly assume a pass-blocking position and protect the outside edge against speed rushers. But Stinchcomb, whose brother Matt is an offensive tackle with the Raiders, must stay above 300 pounds, perhaps adding more bulk, if he hopes to hold up as a run blocker against beefier NFL defensive linemen.

Stinchcomb helped pave the way for Georgia running back Musa Smith to run for 1,324 yards last season. Smith was the first Bulldogs runner to top 1,000 since Garrison Hearst did it in 1992. Stinchcomb succeeds as a run blocker because of sound technique.

In fact, the team that selects Stinchcomb in the draft will be getting a refined blocker who benefited from the direction of line coach Neil Callaway, who tutored current Redskins offensive tackle Chris Samuels at Alabama.

"I don't think there's a better feeling in the world than making a good block," Stinchcomb says, "whether it's pancaking a defensive lineman or running off a linebacker and driving him for 10, 15 yards and that block leading to a hole where the running back breaks it and scores a touchdown."

—Tom Dienhart

Doesn't get off-balance in pass protection and shows good leverage coming out of run-blocking stance. **Grade: 7.9**

Strength: Got stronger as a senior and shows adequate upper-body power but has marginal lower-body strength and lacks superior hip explosion. **Grade: 6.0**

Mobility: Is a great athlete who can stay with top speed rushers. Uses quickness as a run blocker and can consistently reach out on linebackers. **Grade: 7.4**

Bottom line: Stinchcomb is savvy and athletic and has more upside than his brother, Matt (Raiders), but he still needs to bulk up. Durability is a minor issue after suffering a knee injury as a senior. He projects as a left tackle. **FINAL GRADE: 7.1**

6. Ben Johnson, Wisconsin

6-6¼ 325 5.37 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: James Williams, Bears

Strengths: Has excellent size and strength. Is a mauling, sometimes overwhelming run blocker. Rarely loses battles once locked on. Has long arms and strong hands. Gets good hand position and is technically sound as a run blocker. Engulfs smaller ends. Keeps legs driving. Works to finish blocks and plays with a mean streak. Forces a wide arc in pass protection. Uses long arms and upper-body strength to knock back ends.

Weaknesses: Footwork and athleticism are the biggest concerns. Has trouble getting set against top speed rushers and tends to overextend and lose balance against quicker rushers who can change direction. Gets overextended in the open field and lunges too much. Tends to bend at the waist. Lacks good lower-body flexibility. Loses power by playing too upright.

Bottom line: Because of his lack of athleticism, Johnson likely will move to right tackle in the NFL, but he could contribute immediately in the right system. **FINAL GRADE: 6.6**

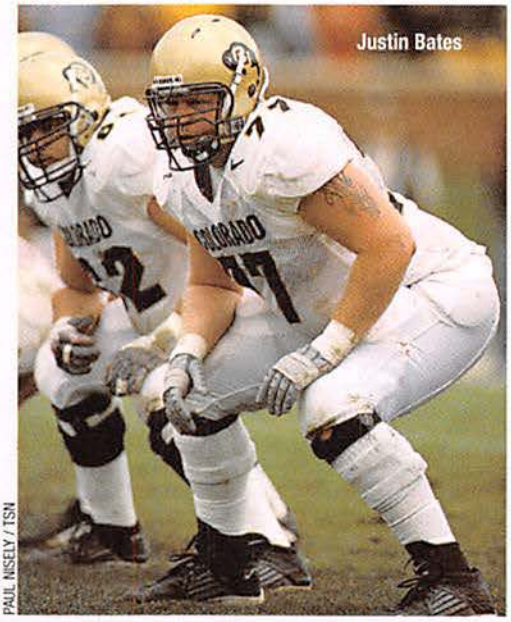
7. Tony Pashos, Illinois

6-5⅝ 325 5.30 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Todd Wade, Dolphins

Strengths: Is massive with a wide wingspan. Has great bulk and strength. Has the size to engulf defenders at the point of attack. Excels in the power running game. Gets into position well in the short area. Takes good blocking angles and typically has a solid first step. Uses his long arms to force a wide arc for rushing ends. Keeps good separation after reaching defenders in pass protection. Excels at anchoring against bull rushes.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal feet, mobility and agility. Has marginal speed and struggles in the open field. Has some problems when asked to reach out on linebackers or hit moving targets. Has most trouble with lateral movement in pass protection. Tends to play too high and bends at waist at times. Lacks great body control. Doesn't consistently get back inside with mirror and slide. Lacks great hip explosion and a powerful punch. Is primarily a position-and-engulf blocker. Must show more of a mean streak.


Justin Bates

PAUL NISELY / TSN

Bottom line: Pashos has good measurables and experience. But as a right tackle, he must develop more explosiveness and toughness before he can contribute in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 6.4**

8. Wayne Hunter, Hawaii*

6-6 305 5.15 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Kenyatta Walker, Buccaneers

Strengths: Shows quick footwork and good balance. Gets set quickly. Shows excellent body control. Mirrors and slides with pass rushers. Plays with good leverage. Uses long arms and strong upper body to maintain separation and force rushers wide. Shows good technique and impressive footwork for limited experience. Has much upside as a pass protector because of his quickness, balance and power. Has a strong upper body and long arms. Shows quick feet and can hit moving targets. Isn't massive or overwhelming at the point of attack but has good initial pop and explosiveness.

Weaknesses: Needs more polish, especially in the running game. Doesn't have a great feel for blocking angles. First steps can be inconsistent. Looks lost at times when trying to reach linebackers. Isn't a mauler; doesn't engulf many defenders.

Bottom line: Hunter is rough around the edges and could have used another season at Hawaii. But if he continues to improve his technique and efficiency, he could develop into a fine starting left tackle. **FINAL GRADE: 6.1**

9. Jeremy Bridges, Southern Mississippi

6-3⅞ 295 5.25 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Jeff Backus, Lions

Strengths: Has good mobility and quickness. Shows the footwork to mirror and slide with pass rushers. Sets nicely in pass protection. Plays with good balance and leverage. Rarely overextends upper body. Moves well laterally and can shuffle inside against double moves. Takes good angles into run blocks. Gets good positioning and has better initial pop than size would indicate. Wins battles with footwork, positioning and upper-body strength.

Weaknesses: Lacks height, bulk and lower-body strength. Has trouble creating a surge in the running game. Rarely overwhelms defensive ends at the point of attack. Has trouble holding ground against bull rushers. May need to move to guard.

Bottom line: Bridges played left tackle in college, but he may lack the feet and size to play there in the NFL. At the least, he has the skills to be a pulling and trapping guard. **FINAL GRADE: 5.9**

10. Steve Sciullo, Marshall

6-5½ 319 5.50 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Jonas Jennings, Bills

Strengths: Has good size and power. Is strong at the point of attack. Has adequate initial pop in pass protection. Finishes most blocks once locked on. Has long wingspan and forces wide arcs. Shows good balance. Has the base to handle bull rushes. Can maul as a run blocker with good strength to sustain blocks. Takes good angles and is mechanically sound. Gets good hand placement. Fights to finish blocks.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal agility for the position. Doesn't show great footwork but got away with it in college. Struggles to move laterally and redirect against faster edge rushers. Has some trouble getting back inside against double moves. Has marginal leverage and bends at the waist. Overextends at times. Lacks hip explosion. Is primarily a position-and-maul run blocker. Lacks explosiveness to knock back ends.

Bottom line: Sciullo was an efficient all-around tackle at Marshall, but because he lacks ideal quickness and lateral movement, he may need to switch to guard in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 5.5**

11. Jordan Black, Notre Dame

6-5⅜ 302 5.30 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Blake Brockermeyer, Broncos

Strengths: Has good height and adequate bulk. Is a physical blocker who excels in the running game. Has impressive upper-body strength. Maintains separation well in pass protection. Is technically sound. Bends knees well and plays with good leverage. Plays under control and maintains balance in pass protection. Is more of a position run blocker but has a fistfight mentality. Takes good angles to defenders. Packs a powerful hand punch.

Weaknesses: Has trouble dropping off the line and setting up quickly against speed rushers. When at guard, he struggled against quick, one-gap defensive tackles. Lacks the footwork to consistently mirror and slide against athletic pass rushers. Lacks explosiveness and lower-body strength. Has trouble driving back defenders. Shows no hip explo-

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sion. Doesn't overpower and has some trouble anchoring against bull rushes.
Bottom line: Primarily a left tackle at Notre Dame, Black projects as a right tackle or guard in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 5.8**

12. Will Ofenheusle, Tennessee

6-7⅛ 308 5.35 4th round
NFL comparison: Scott Gragg, 49ers
Strengths: Has excellent height and size. Has a strong upper body and can be overwhelming at the point of attack. Is a mauling run blocker. Drives legs well and uses long arms to keep separation. Has adequate initial pop. Has a wide wingspan and uses it to force wide arcs for defensive ends. Wins most matchups when locked on.
Weaknesses: Past injuries (shoulder, wrist) are a concern. Lacks ideal athleticism and footwork. Is tall and bends waist at times. Doesn't always play with good leverage or body control. Overextends at times in pass protection and has trouble shuffling back inside against double moves. Struggles to run block in the open field.
Bottom line: Ofenheusle is limited by his lack of athleticism and must improve his footwork to play outside in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 5.2**

13. Gary Byrd, Clemson

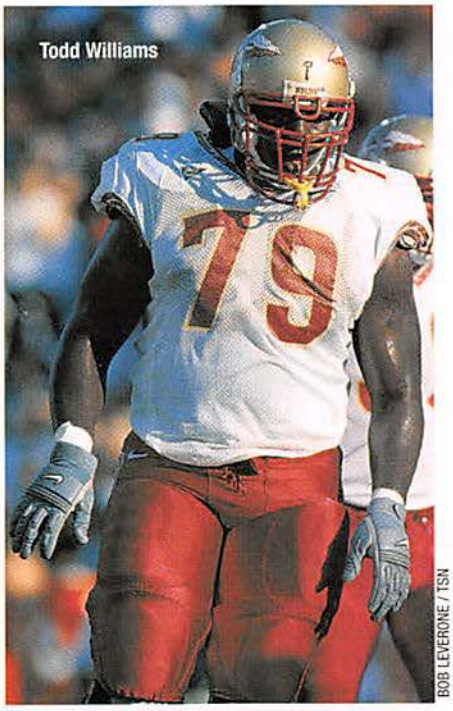
6-4⅛ 314 5.20 5th round
NFL comparison: Todd Steussie, Panthers
Strengths: Has good physical skills. Is experienced and consistent. Plays with good leverage. Bends knees in pass protection and doesn't overextend. Gets back inside against double moves. At his best when run blocking. Shows good strength and power. Drives legs well and creates surge. Has solid lock-on qualities. Comes out of stance low, plays with good leverage and finishes blocks well.
Weaknesses: Lacks explosiveness in all areas. Doesn't show great initial pop. Lacks ideal quickness and athleticism. Has trouble against speed rushers. Isn't very mobile.
Bottom line: Because of his lack of height, athleticism and mobility, Byrd projects as a right tackle or guard in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 4.7**

14. Justin Bates, Colorado

6-3⅝ 293 5.30 5th round
NFL comparison: Barry Sims, Raiders
Strengths: Is an experienced, durable, efficient blocker. Rarely makes mental mistakes. Has good toughness and upper-body strength at the point of attack. Has a long wingspan and stays under control and balanced in pass protection. Can redirect pass rushers with long, strong arms. Has good initial pop as a run blocker. Is effective in zone schemes. Is a hard worker who fights to finish blocks.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal feet and bulk. Lacks the mauling qualities of an NFL right tackle and the agility of an NFL left tackle. Has some trouble getting set against quicker edge rushers. Rarely dominates at the point of attack. Is primarily a position and wall-off tackle. Lacks ideal lower-body strength to push the pile.
Bottom line: Bates' best chance to become an NFL starter is to move inside.
FINAL GRADE: 4.4

15. Todd Williams, Florida State

6-4⅝ 325 5.30 5th round
NFL comparison: Stockar McDougle, Lions
Strengths: Is a classic right tackle with mauling qualities. Has good bulk, strength and power. Engulfs most defenders at the point of attack and pushes the pile in the running game. Shows adequate initial pop. Has a strong lower body; holds his ground against bull rushers. Rarely loses a physical battle once locked on the defender.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal footwork and agility. Struggles against quick edge rushers. Has to overextend upper body to make up for lack of quickness and struggles against double moves to the inside. Gets tired, sluggish and sloppy late in games. Has a bad attitude and is a character risk.
Bottom line: Williams is a classic mauler who is big and physically dominating at times. He might have to move to guard because of poor footwork and technique. **FINAL GRADE: 4.3**


Todd Williams

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

16. Wade Smith, Memphis

6-3¾ 290 4.95 5th round
NFL comparison: John Fina, Cardinals
Strengths: Shows exceptional footwork and quickness. Might be the best athlete in the class. Blocks moving targets in the running game. Shows great initial quickness. Takes solid angles to blocks. Slides well laterally in pass protection. Has excellent body control. Gets a quick, deep set in pass protection and plays with good leverage.
Weaknesses: Lacks bulk and strength. Has trouble matching up against powerful defensive ends. Lacks the lower-body strength to hold his ground at the point of attack. Struggles to move the pile in the running game. Does not have great leg drive.
Bottom line: Smith has excellent footwork and athleticism and might be the most mobile tackle in this draft. He has more upside than any other Day 2 tackle prospect and could prove to be a steal in a couple of years. **FINAL GRADE: 4.1**

17. Garry Johnson, Arkansas State

6-3½ 304 5.27 6th round
NFL comparison: Todd Weiner, Falcons
Strengths: Has good footwork. Takes good angles to blocks. Has impressive upper-body strength. Gets good position and sustains blocks. Hits moving targets in the running game. Sets up quickly in pass protection. Mirrors and slides well in pass protection. Moves well laterally. Shows good initial pop.
Weaknesses: Lacks great bulk and will not be able to overpower NFL defensive linemen. Must improve lower-body strength. Struggles to move the pile in the running game. Does not work hard enough at conditioning and weight training. Gets sluggish late in games.
Bottom line: Johnson hasn't faced elite competition, but he has the size, footwork and mobility to be worthy of a late-round pick.
FINAL GRADE: 3.9

18. Damian Lavergne, Louisiana Tech

6-5⅞ 327 5.30 6th round
NFL comparison: Aaron Gibson, Bears
Strengths: Has great bulk and strength. Plays with adequate leverage. Can be an overwhelming run blocker at the point of attack. Engulfs ends once he locks on them. Has long arms and a strong upper body. Forces pass rushers to take a wide arc to the quarterback. Has decent short-area quickness. Moves well laterally and, when fresh, has good initial quickness. Doesn't overextend upper body often and uses powerful hand punch to create and maintain separation.
Weaknesses: Tends to become overweight and sluggish. Does not work hard in the weight room. Must improve overall strength. Plays too high and looks top-heavy at times. Is lazy and shows inconsistent effort on film.
Bottom line: Lavergne never developed into a dominating player or a top prospect because of his poor work ethic. He lacks muscle development and conditioning. If a coach can get him to work hard, Lavergne could be a late-round steal. **FINAL GRADE: 3.6**

19. Kareem Marshall, Georgia

6-4¾ 359 5.36 6th round
NFL comparison: Jerry Wunsch, Seahawks
Strengths: Is massive. Has wide wingspan and is tough to get around in pass protection. Has adequate upper-body strength. Maintains separation in pass protection if he locks on to the defender. Is a mauler in the running game with good leg drive when playing with proper balance.
Weaknesses: Lacks good agility and lateral movement and has trouble changing directions in pass protection. Plays too high at

times and can look top-heavy. Lacks an explosive punch and initial pop. Shows an inconsistent first step. Has trouble blocking in the open field. Does not always get great position and will lunge at defenders. Needs to work on footwork and explosiveness.
Bottom line: Marshall is worth a look in the final few rounds because of his size and strength and the improvement he showed in 2002 after extended repetitions with the first unit. **FINAL GRADE: 3.4**

20. Robbie Doane, Texas

6-6 313 5.46 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Zach Wiegert, Jaguars
Strengths: Has ideal size. Is tall and well built. Has a wide wingspan and is tough to get around at the point of attack. Has adequate lower-body strength. Takes excellent angles to defenders and understands positioning. Uses long arms to maintain separation in pass protection. Showed improved footwork and strength in 2002. Is technically sound.
Weaknesses: Lacks mobility and struggles to block linebackers. Lacks pop and explosion at the point of attack. Does not knock many defenders back. Has trouble moving laterally, especially against speed rushers. Struggles to mirror and slide against quick defensive ends.
Bottom line: Doane has terrific size and good strength and takes great angles, but his lack of mobility and explosiveness at the point of attack will cause him to drop to the late rounds. **FINAL GRADE: 3.1**

21. Derrick Brantley, Clemson

6-4¼ 301 5.30 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Matt Light, Patriots
Strengths: Has good height, weight and footwork. Stays balanced in pass protection. Gets set quickly and bends knees well. Moves well laterally against most defensive ends. Has superior upper-body strength. Shows initial pop. Maintains separation with long arms. Shows good strength in the running game. Works to finish blocks. Has the size/strength combination to handle most defensive ends at the point of attack in the running game.
Weaknesses: Durability is a huge concern after a season-ending knee injury in '02. Needs to improve technique. Gets sloppy with his first step, doesn't always take great angles to blocks and gets out of position at times. Lacks experience. Looks timid in pass protection at times and tends to absorb the pass rusher rather than attack him.
Bottom line: Before his injury, Brantley had quick footwork and the strength to develop into a quality NFL tackle. If he had stayed healthy and continued to improve, he could have been a Day 1 pick. **FINAL GRADE: 2.8**

22. Seth Wand, Northwest Missouri St.

6-5⅞ 328 5.10 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Michael Thompson, Falcons
Strengths: Has terrific size. Has ideal height and a good frame. Shows good footwork and moves well laterally. Plays with adequate balance. Mirrors and slides well in pass protection. Has quick footwork and shows adequate leverage. Is able to reach linebackers in the running game. Has the quickness to get into position in the running game. Is mostly a position and wall-off run blocker.
Weaknesses: Must improve strength and explosiveness. Shows marginal initial pop. Lacks the lower-body strength to hold his ground against bull rushers. Is a finesse run blocker who lacks the power to create a surge. Must show a better first step and a better feel for blocking angles in the running game.
Bottom line: Wand flashed some potential during Senior Bowl practices, but he lacks lower-body strength and explosiveness as a blocker and consistently gets overwhelmed at the point of attack by big, strong ends. He has a long way to go before he can contribute in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 2.6**

Kareem Marshall

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23. Tim Provost, San Jose State

6-5 285 5.17 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Matt Lepsis, Broncos
Strengths: Is a good athlete with quick footwork and impressive mobility. Has a good first step and almost always is in position. Plays with leverage and is technically sound. Takes good angles to blocks. Is one of the better offensive tackles at reaching linebackers and hitting moving targets. Mirrors and slides well in pass protection. Plays with good balance and doesn't get fooled by double moves. Is adept at picking up tendencies.
Weaknesses: Has marginal size and strength. Lacks lower-body strength to hold his ground against bull rushers. Is not physical or powerful enough in the running game. Is too much of a finesse player. Does not use his hands well. Shows marginal hand punch and lacks ideal initial pop. Has a difficult time pushing the pile in the running game and gets stood up too much at the point of attack.
Bottom line: Provost needs time to add bulk, but he is an interesting late-round prospect because of his athleticism. **FINAL GRADE: 2.5**

24. Mike Saffer, UCLA

6-4⅝ 302 5.35 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Everett Lindsay, Vikings
Strengths: Has good size and experience. Is strong and plays with good leverage. Is at his best in the running game. Shows good initial pop. Takes good angles to his blocks and generally gets in solid position. Shows improved footwork and quickness in pass protection. Has a strong upper body and gets a good initial punch. Is tough, plays with a mean streak and finishes almost all blocks once he locks on the defender.
Weaknesses: Is limited athletically and has trouble in the open field. Lacks speed, lateral quickness and lower-body strength. Has trouble hitting moving targets. Needs help against speed rushers at times. Tends to overextend his upper body to reach pass rushers, and thus gets beat back inside on occasion.
Bottom line: Saffer lacks size, leverage, lower-body explosiveness and mobility to play tackle in the NFL. He might be moved to guard. **FINAL GRADE: 2.3**

25. Dustin Rykert, Brigham Young

6-7 300 5.40 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Matt Joyce, Lions
Strengths: Is tall and shows adequate footwork. Has a massive wingspan and uses long arms to maintain separation in pass protection. Gets set with decent quickness in pass protection and rides pass rushers wide of the pocket. Takes good angles in the running game. Uses wingspan to engulf defensive ends at the point of attack. Shows adequate upper-body strength and works to sustain blocks. Rarely makes a mental mistake and is efficient in all aspects of the game.
Weaknesses: Lacks bulk and strength. Needs to add weight and become stronger, especially in the lower body. Tends to play too high. Does not get great leverage in the running game and lacks the lower-body strength to drive through defenders. Looks stiff at times in pass protection when forced to move laterally. Lacks leverage and great body control and struggles to mirror and slide against quick ends in pass protection.
Bottom line: Rykert has some upside if he can improve his technique and add some bulk and strength. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 26. Ulish Booker, Michigan State, 6-6⅜, 303, 5.20 (40 time); **27.** Dante Ellington*, Alabama, 6-6, 355, 5.23; **28.** Jake Kuppe, Minnesota, 6-5⅜, 350, 5.80; **29.** Jason Jimenez, Southern Mississippi, 6-6, 296, 5.23; **30.** Marques Ogden, Howard, 6-4¼, 317, 5.15; **31.** Brennan Curtin*, Notre Dame, 6-5½, 305, 5.23; **32.** Pete Lougheed, Purdue, 6-4½, 286, 5.25; **33.** Adam Goldberg, Wyoming, 6-5½, 330, 5.50; **34.** Jason Jowers, Wisconsin, 6-6⅛, 306, 5.45; **35.** Justin Sands, Kansas, 6-5, 310, 5.40; **36.** David Porter, Iowa, 6-5½, 317, 5.52; **37.** Scott Kooistra, N.C. State, 6-5½, 301, 5.2; **38.** Dralinn Burks, Kansas State, 6-3½, 307, 5.19; **39.** Watts Sanderson, South Carolina, 6-5⅛, 297, 5.18; **40.** Dennis Wendel, Bowling Green, 6-7, 310, 5.3.

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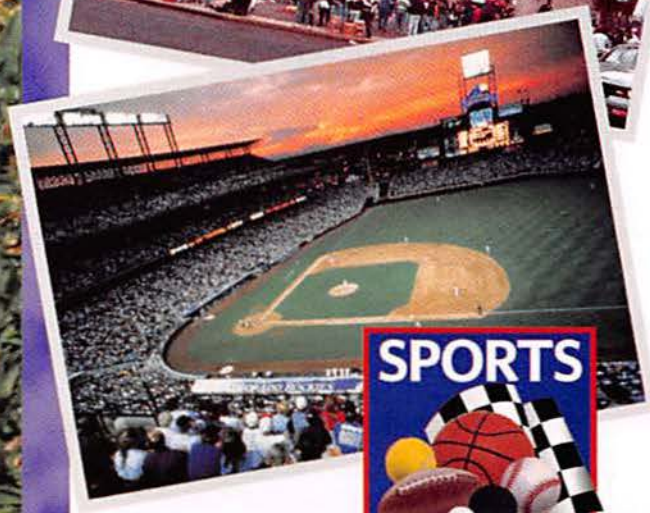

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Guards

The 2002 guard class was hyped as one of the best in the last decade, but only 13 players were drafted, including just four on Day 1. The class this year doesn't have a lot of talent at the top, but it's an above-average group because of its depth.

Eric Steinbach is the best guard, and he might be the second-best lineman overall after Utah tackle Jordan Gross. Steinbach's stock soared at the Senior Bowl, where he proved he could play left tackle against some of the best defensive linemen in the country.

After Steinbach, there are four promising prospects—Vince Manuwai, Montrae Holland, Derrick Dockery and Torrin Tucker—who should go in Rounds 2 and 3.

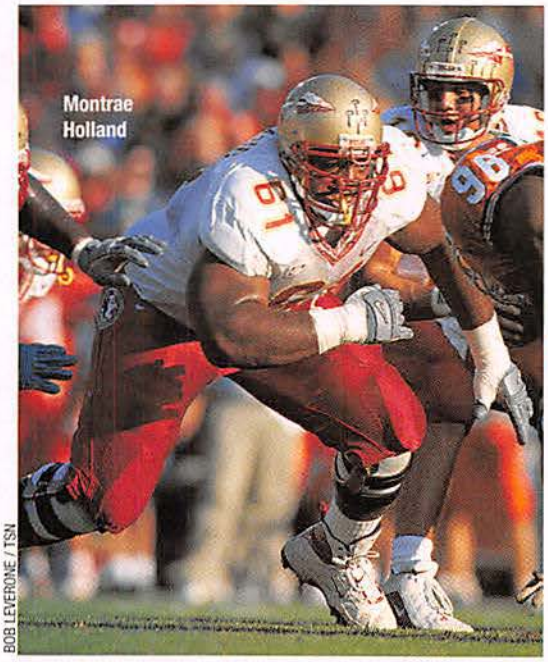
Georgia's starting guards from its SEC championship team, Alex Jackson and Kevin Breedlove, could get drafted on Day 2.

Harvard's Jamil Soriano is the only legitimate prospect who didn't play in Division I-A.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Guards taken	13
Round 1	1
Round 2	2
Round 3	1
Round 4	3
Round 5	1
Round 6	2
Round 7	3


Montrae Holland

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

1. Eric Steinbach, Iowa

6-5¾ 300 4.88 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Adam Timmerman, Rams

Run blocking: Shows quick feet. Consistently gets into position. Has good balance and body control in the open field. Lacks great bulk and strength but is a former tight end with good height who still can add bulk. Shows some hip explosion and initial pop but rarely outmuscles defensive tackles while run blocking. Doesn't have the lower-body strength or mass to create an adequate surge at times. **Grade: 8.2**

Pass blocking: Has the feet of a left tackle. Can mirror and slide in pass protection. Bends at the knees and has outstanding lateral quickness for an interior player. Excels with hand placement. Is athletic but lacks ideal lower-body strength. Has trouble anchoring against bull rushes. **Grade: 8.8**

Initial quickness: Has quick feet and initial burst. Rarely gets beat by first-step quickness. Shows great leverage out of stance. **Grade: 8.8**

Strength: Durability has been a problem. Has had ankle and shoulder injuries and missed significant time throughout college career. Lacks ideal size and has trouble keeping weight up. Has a lean frame. **Grade: 7.9**

Mobility: Is the most athletic guard in the class. As a run blocker, he pulls and traps and excels at reaching out on linebackers. Adjusts on the move. Very good footwork in pass protection. **Grade: 8.7**

Bottom line: Steinbach, a converted tight end, is the most intriguing offensive line prospect in the draft. There are significant concerns about his injury history and lack of bulk, but he stayed healthy as a senior. He showed much upside as a left tackle during Senior Bowl practices, which increased his value. As the most talented and athletic guard in the class, he should be the second offensive lineman selected.

FINAL GRADE: 8.5

2. Vince Manuwai, Hawaii

6-1¾ 303 5.35 2nd round

NFL comparison: Dave Fiore, 49ers

Run blocking: Is inexperienced and raw. Lacks height and has short arms. Isn't the typical mauler. Isn't overwhelming at the point of attack and must be in good position to sustain blocks. Must learn to finish better. Is naturally powerful and shows great feet. Can pull and trap. Takes good angles and has adequate lower-body strength. **Grade: 7.4**

Pass blocking: Excels in the short area. Has a quick set. Has adequate bulk and excellent upper-body strength. Plays with good leverage and gets great initial pop. Stays balanced and mirrors and slides well. Has a great feel for stunts and blitzes; doesn't overextend. Has short arms and struggles to keep good separation. **Grade: 8.6**

Initial quickness: Comes off the ball quickly as a run blocker. Is quick out of his stance and excels at getting back and setting up with leverage in pass protection. Rarely loses to first-step quickness. **Grade: 8.4**

Strength: Shows explosive power. Is tough to overpower at the point of attack but doesn't have great bulk. Doesn't engulf or overwhelm many defensive tackles. **Grade: 7.6**

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-4	320	5.00
NFL minimum	6-1	285	5.45

Guards must have enough athletic ability to reach linebackers in the running game and handle quicker defensive tackles in the passing game. Because most teams now use a 4-3 defensive alignment, with massive run-stuffing tackles in the middle, it has become more important for scouts to find guards, such as Leonard Davis (Cardinals), who have the size and strength to match up against those huge tackles.

ON THE RISE: Enoch DeMar, Indiana
This late-round prospect is creeping up the board after making a strong impression on scouts at the Hula Bowl.

ON THE DECLINE: Cedric Williams, South Carolina
Durability concerns and poor size/athleticism left him without an invitation to the NFL Scouting Combine.

SLEEPER: Jamil Soriano, Harvard
Began his career at 250 pounds but has added 50, thus becoming a promising developmental project.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Anthony Davis, Virginia Tech
He has talent, but he hasn't developed physically, he lacks a "killer" instinct and his work ethic is questionable.

BIGGEST RISK: Derrick Dockery, Texas
A medical condition caused him fatigue and time lost in 2001. Also, his weight must be monitored.

BEST PASS BLOCKER: Vince Manuwai, Hawaii
He has the pass-blocking skills of an NFL left tackle. Too bad he doesn't have the height or the reach.

BEST RUN BLOCKER: Montrae Holland, Florida State
He's quicker and more athletic than most people think. Once the 331-pound Holland locks on, it's all over.

MOST ATHLETIC: Eric Steinbach, Iowa
A four-sport athlete in high school, he spent his first season in college at tight end, then moved to guard in '99.

WEIGHT ROOM STRENGTH: Torrin Tucker, Southern Miss
His technique must improve, but no one else in this class is as naturally strong and can control the point of attack.

MOST VERSATILE: Makoa Freitas, Arizona
Has experience at every spot on the line except center. Word has it he's a terrific pick-up basketball player.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

Mobility: Has much better short-area quickness than open-field mobility. Struggles with open-field blocking at times. Plays with balance and has good quickness but has trouble changing directions and hitting moving targets. **Grade: 7.6**

Bottom line: Manuwai is an unusual breed for the position: undersized with terrific footwork and pass-protection skills but raw as a run blocker. He has experience starting at right guard and right tackle in college; his body type best fits inside in the NFL.

FINAL GRADE: 7.9

3. Montrae Holland, Florida State

6-1⅛ 331 5.30 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Larry Allen, Cowboys

Run blocking: Is a squatty mauler with great bulk and power. Can be overpowering at the point of attack. Pushes the pile and drives legs well to the finish. Has good body strength. Is aggressive and plays with a mean streak. Lacks great athleticism and struggles in the open field at times but is good in the short area. **Grade: 8.2**

Pass blocking: Has to play inside because of a lack of height. Is not an elite athlete but shows good footwork in the short area. Has a quick set. Shows good lateral movement and can mirror and slide. Doesn't get overpowered by bull rushes. Wins almost every battle once locked on. **Grade: 7.3**

Initial quickness: Isn't great in this category and struggles against some top one-gap defensive tackles. Shows good leverage coming out of his stance. Has good quickness in pass protection and almost always gets into position as a short-area run blocker. **Grade: 6.5**

Strength: Is a wide body with great mauling skills. Plays with a wide base and good leverage. Has excellent lower-body bulk and power. Can knock defensive tackles back with his initial punch. **Grade: 8.0**

Mobility: Moves well for his size but isn't great in the open field and struggles to consistently hit moving targets. Moves well laterally and excels in the short area. **Grade: 6.1**

Bottom line: Holland raised his value by steadily adding strength and quickness as a three-year starter in college. Because he has had three arthroscopic knee surgeries and an ankle surgery, durability is a concern.

FINAL GRADE: 7.2

4. Derrick Dockery, Texas

6-5⅝ 355 5.50 **3rd round**

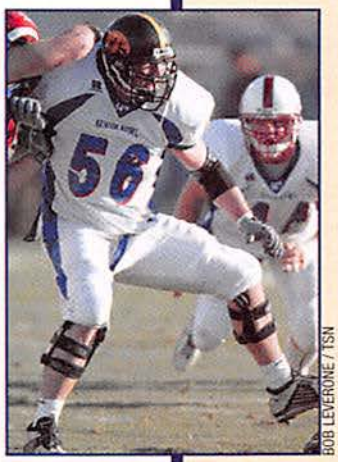
NFL comparison: Leonard Davis, Cardinals

Strengths: Is a massive mauler. Rarely loses a one-on-one matchup if in position as a run blocker. Has excellent size. Lacks explosive hips and upper-body strength but is overwhelming at the point of attack. Shows decent feet in the short area. Shows adequate first-step quickness and typically gets into good position. Has good initial quickness in pass protection and sets up quickly. Has long arms and is tough to get around.

Weaknesses: Can get overweight and sluggish. Tends to wear down late in games. Isn't a good athlete. The more open field he sees, the less effective he becomes. Has trouble when called upon to reach out on linebackers. Struggles to hit moving targets. Overextends and lunges. Doesn't have the lateral movement or consistent balance to play outside. Is top-heavy. Struggles to redirect. Doesn't pick up blitzes or stunts well inside if he already has slid outside. Lacks explosive hand punch.

Bottom line: Dockery is the ideal fit for an NFL power running game. He has experience at both guard and tackle, but he's better inside, where he can be protected.

FINAL GRADE: 6.8



BOB LEVERONE / TSN

5. Torrin Tucker, Southern Mississippi

6-5⅞ 316 5.35

3rd round

NFL comparison: Chris Naeole, Jaguars

Strengths: Has a long wingspan and good initial pop. Has a strong upper body. Excels at maintaining separation in pass protection. Has adequate initial quickness and shows good footwork in the short area. Sinks hips and plays with good leverage. Uses long, strong arms well. Is a powerful run blocker; uses great size and strength at the point of attack. Is aggressive and has a mean streak. Rarely loses a one-on-one battle once locked on. Isn't great in the open field and is only an average athlete but excels at getting out on pulls and traps. Has adequate body control and can hit moving targets.

Weaknesses: Has had trouble controlling his temper and has a reputation for being somewhat immature. Is inconsistent. Sometimes relies on physical skills too much. Takes some poor angles and doesn't always take good first steps. Lacks ideal lateral movement and struggles to redirect in pass protection. Is much better moving forward than backward. Loses balance at times while trying to mirror and slide. Has trouble getting a deep set.

Bottom line: Tucker must be more consistent and learn to control his emotions, but he has the potential to dominate with his tremendous size. **FINAL GRADE: 6.5**

6. Anthony Davis, Virginia Tech

6-4 316 5.15 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Cosey Coleman, Buccaneers

Strengths: Has good bulk and strength and is a good athlete for his size. Displays adequate feet and lateral movement in pass protection. Shows some burst and initial pop. Has good short-area explosion and upper-body strength. Has the size to anchor against bull rushes. Can be overwhelming at the point of attack when in position and playing with leverage. Shows balance and body control to hit moving targets. Can reach out on linebackers. Mirrors and slides well when working hard and maintaining leverage.

Weaknesses: Is an underachiever. Lacks a

SPOTLIGHT

Eric Steinbach
Iowa

Eric Steinbach's first start as an offensive lineman was a baptism by fire. A star high school defensive end who came to Iowa to play tight end, Steinbach, then a 255-pound redshirt freshman, was in Ohio Stadium on October 30, 1999, when he lined up at guard against the Buckeyes' Ryan Pickett, a 2001 first-round draft pick of the Rams.

"On the second play of the game, we ran an outside sweep," says former Hawkeyes offensive line coach Joe Philbin, now an assistant coach with the Packers. "(Eric) pulled and made a good block on (current Bills cornerback) Nate Clements, just laid one on the guy out there in space. I said, 'Man, we found ourselves a player.' "

Under the tutelage of Philbin and Iowa coach Kirk Ferentz, a former offensive line coach with the Browns and Ravens, Steinbach emerged as an All-Big Ten first-team selection each of the last two years. In the process, Steinbach proved himself wrong. The first time Ferentz asked him to move to the offensive line, Steinbach said no.

"At first I was a little skeptical," says Steinbach, one of three Iowa starting linemen who used to be tight ends.

For the past two seasons, Steinbach helped anchor the line on what became the Big Ten's highest-scoring offense in 2002. He opened holes for 1,000-yard rushers Ladell Betts in 2001 and Fred Russell in 2002. But Iowa's struggles in Steinbach's first two seasons even helped his development.

"When Eric first started playing, we had trouble running the ball," Philbin says. "He had a lot of training in pass protection. He's adept at picking up twists and blitzes."

Steinbach, who is 6-5¾, now weighs 300, but he still doesn't have quite the bulk of a typical NFL offensive lineman. What makes him an attractive pro prospect is his combination of strong fundamentals, balance, quickness and versatility.

"He reminds me of the type of offensive lineman that Denver seems to be having success with," says an AFC college scouting director. "He's very athletic; he's smart. Those two things make up for some of his lack of size."

Steinbac, though he worked to get up to 300 pounds, might have to adjust to another position change. Some scouts believe he is a good candidate to play left tackle.

"Being lighter, quick and athletic, the position is a good fit for me," Steinbach says. "I'm looking forward to trying out left tackle. I'm not looking down on it like I was at first moving to the line." —*Naila-Jean Meyers*

good work ethic on and off the field. Looks lazy at times. Doesn't show enough burst or leverage out of his stance. Lacks ideal initial quickness. Plays with too much body lean and overextends as a result. Tends to play too high and loses power and balance. Lacks "killer instinct" at times and doesn't always work to finish blocks.
Bottom line: Davis primarily was a college left tackle who will be a much better fit at guard in the NFL. He has the physical skills to eventually become a starter, possibly even at right tackle, if he improves his focus and consistency. **FINAL GRADE: 5.8**

7. Taylor Whitley, Texas A&M

6-3⅝ 310 5.35 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Marco Rivera, Packers
Strengths: Has adequate size. Has good upper-body strength and shows adequate initial pop. Is sound technically and uses his hands well. Has good awareness in pass protection and uses strong upper body to keep separation. Takes good angles and plays with balance when run blocking. Drives legs and works to finish blocks. Has been durable.
Weaknesses: Lacks elite physical skills; is somewhat of an overachiever. Doesn't have the height or feet to play outside. Lacks athleticism and mobility. Gets into trouble against quicker defensive tackles or when forced to pull, trap or block in the open field. Has marginal speed and subpar quickness. Struggles to slide laterally in pass protection. Must be protected inside and has trouble when shuffling back inside to pick up the blitz.
Bottom line: Whitley showed good versatility in college, backing up at both guard and tackle before becoming a full-time starting guard in 2001. But he is limited athletically and can't play tackle in the NFL.
FINAL GRADE: 5.3

8. David Diehl, Illinois

6-5⅝ 301 5.30 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Brad Meester, Jaguars
Strengths: Is tall with a good frame. Has adequate quickness. Can mirror and slide in pass protection. Has long arms and adequate upper-body strength. Has the wingspan to maintain separation. Has improved his hand placement. Takes consistent angles, gets good position and uses long frame to wall off defenders when run blocking.
Weaknesses: Lacks the ideal experience, leverage and power to play tackle. Lacks the bulk and mauling skills to play guard. Plays too high and struggles to get leverage when run blocking. Doesn't overpower many defensive tackles at the point of attack. Lacks lower-body strength. Gets into trouble against bull rushers. Doesn't create enough surge in the running game. Must improve hand punch and develop a mean streak.
Bottom line: Diehl looks more like a tackle than a guard, but he's not powerful enough to play outside and must learn to play with better leverage. He needs to bulk up and become more physical to make it as an interior lineman. **FINAL GRADE: 4.5**

9. Gus Felder, Penn State

6-5 321 5.55 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Steve Hutchinson, Seahawks
Strengths: Has excellent size and a long wingspan. Shows adequate short-area quickness. Is difficult to get around in confined areas. Gets set well in pass protection. Plays with adequate leverage. Uses long arms to keep separation. Has a strong upper body. Gets good hand placement and can control defensive linemen with arms and hands. Is an experienced and efficient zone run blocker. Takes good angles into blocks and is somewhat of a position and wall-off blocker. Wins most battles once locked on.
Weaknesses: Is a limited athlete who has trouble in the open field. Lacks the athleticism to play outside in the NFL. Struggles to reach out on linebackers when run blocking and overextends when trying to hit moving targets. Lacks great lateral movement. Doesn't always maintain balance and has some trouble redirecting in pass protection.
Bottom line: Felder primarily was a left tackle in college, but he lacks the feet to play there in the NFL so he likely will move to guard. He may need time to adjust to moving inside, but he has the size and short-area skills to develop into a starter. **FINAL GRADE: 4.2**

10. Jeff Roehl, Northwestern

6-3¾ 300 5.14 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Dan Neil, Broncos
Strengths: Is experienced and has adequate size. Shows good footwork and speed. Consistently gets into position as a run blocker. Can get out and reach linebackers. Hustles non-stop. Has good upper-body strength and shows good hand placement. Is a fistfighter who plays with a mean streak. Has a quick set in pass protection and stays balanced. Can mirror and slide in the short area. Is adept at picking up blitzes and stunts. Uses hand punch to create separation.
Weaknesses: Lacks size and isn't an overpowering run blocker. Has some trouble anchoring against bigger, stronger defensive tackles on bull rushes. Does not get the ideal run-blocking push against massive tackles because of stiff play and inconsistent knee bend and leverage. Isn't much of a mauler. Lacks great athleticism.
Bottom line: Roehl was a steady and durable blue-collar left guard in college who rarely made mistakes. He isn't spectacular but is efficient enough to play in the NFL.
FINAL GRADE: 4.0

11. Alex Jackson, Georgia

6-3⅝ 356 5.40 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Mo Collins, Raiders
Strengths: Is a massive mauler. Has great size and power. Can engulf most defensive linemen at the point of attack. Has long arms; keeps good separation in pass protection if in position. Has the base and strength to anchor against bull rushes. Is tough to get around as a pass protector. Pushes the pile in the running game. Excels at sticking with blocks and has the lower-body strength to control the line.
Weaknesses: Has less than a full year of starting experience. Shows inconsistent technique. Plays too high at times and loses power. Tends to get sluggish and wear down late in games. Weight is a constant concern. Lacks quick feet and is a marginal athlete. Struggles against quick, one-gap defensive tackles and has trouble run blocking in the open field.
Bottom line: If Jackson watches his weight closely and continues to improve his game, he'll have some upside. **FINAL GRADE: 3.8**

12. Jamil Soriano, Harvard

6-3⅞ 300 5.50 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Corbin Lacina, Vikings
Strengths: Has good size and is tough and scrappy. Works hard. Shows decent quickness in sets. Shows good upper-body strength and initial pop. Hand placement is excellent. Shows good technique and footwork. Moves well laterally in the short area. Is a good fit inside in pass protection. Shows awareness and picks up blitzes well. Takes good angles in run blocking. Is a positional fistfighter.
Weaknesses: Lacks both the size and athleticism to play outside in the NFL. Doesn't have great bulk or lower-body strength. Won't overpower many NFL defensive linemen at the point of attack and may have trouble handling bull rushes. Doesn't show a great base. The more open field he sees, the less effective he becomes.
Bottom line: Soriano primarily was a right tackle in college, but his skills are better suited to play inside in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 3.7**

13. Cedric Williams, South Carolina

6-2⅜ 303 5.29 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Frank Middleton, Raiders
Strengths: Is experienced and efficient. Shows good strength and feet. Has a quick first step. Has sound footwork and lateral movement in the short area. Has a strong upper body with long arms. Keeps separation in pass protection. Is a powerful run blocker. Takes good angles and consistently gets into great position. Drives legs and excels at sustaining blocks once locked on.
Weaknesses: Has neither great height nor bulk. Has trouble at times when forced to anchor against bigger defensive tackles on bull rushes. Is somewhat top-heavy and doesn't always play with good leverage. Has marginal feet and athleticism. Struggles to consistently reach and chip linebackers.
Bottom line: The problem with Williams, outside of minor durability concerns, is that he struggles with open-field blocking and isn't massive. **FINAL GRADE: 3.5**

14. Greg Schindler, Stanford

6-4½ 316 5.40 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Mike Goff, Bengals
Strengths: Has nice size and good strength. Is primarily a mauler. Uses long arms and wide frame to make up for so-so feet in pass pro-

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tection. Is strong at the point of attack. Wins most battles once locked on. Can be an overwhelming run blocker at times if playing with leverage. Has good upper-body strength and mass. Seems to know the angles and gets in good position.
Weaknesses: His lack of athleticism is the biggest concern. Shows marginal feet. Has trouble moving laterally. Struggles to slide in pass protection and to get out of his stance against quicker defensive tackles. Gets in trouble when forced to defend outside-in moves. Isn't as effective on pulls or in the open field as in the short area. Has trouble hitting moving targets. Doesn't show much explosiveness. Lacks good initial pop and hip explosion. Lacks suddenness when forced to shuffle or get out of his stance quickly.
Bottom line: Schindler is an experienced and versatile prospect who is a limited athlete and will need to be protected inside in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 3.4**

15. Makoa Freitas, Arizona

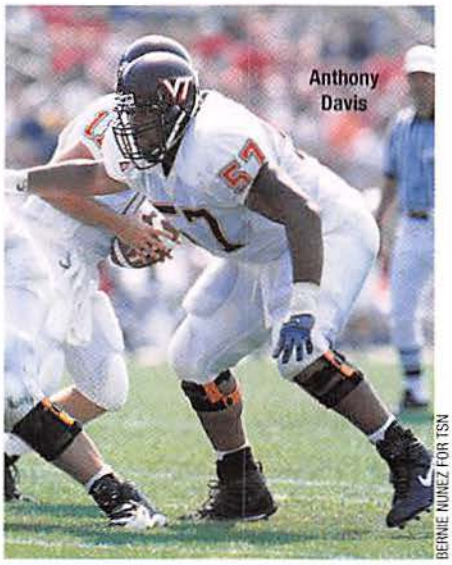
6-4 300 5.30 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Kevin Donnalley, Panthers
Strengths: Is an experienced starter and efficient blocker. Is technically sound. Uses good bulk and strength at the point of attack. Gets in good position when run blocking. Has a strong lower body. Drives legs through blocks. Excels at finishing. Has good initial pop and has improved his footwork and balance in pass protection. Rarely loses battles once locked on.
Weaknesses: Is a marginal athlete. Struggles when called upon to get out and hit moving targets. Has some trouble against quicker and faster rush ends. Struggles to mirror and slide against double moves. Doesn't have the ideal height or feet to play tackle in the NFL. Lacks hip explosion. Isn't overly powerful; doesn't knock many defensive linemen off their feet.
Bottom line: Freitas, who primarily played left tackle in college, is the son of former Lions and Bucs tackle Rocky Freitas, who played 11 seasons in the NFL. He likely will need to make a smooth transition to guard to have a similar stay in the NFL.
FINAL GRADE: 3.2

16. Dave Petruziello, Michigan

6-3 300 5.20 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Brian Waters, Chiefs
Strengths: Has room to bulk up. Showed great improvement from junior to senior season. Has quick feet and moves well laterally. Can mirror and slide in pass protection. Gets out nicely on pulls and traps. Shows good balance and quickness when blocking in the open field. Has a strong upper body and shows some pop in hand punch.
Weaknesses: Is raw and needs work on technique. Must learn to play with better leverage. Lacks bulk and must improve his strength. Has a marginal base. Struggles to anchor against bull rushes at times. Isn't overwhelming at the point of attack. Must be in great position to complete assignments.
Bottom line: A former defensive end, Petruziello started at right guard for most of his final two college seasons and made great strides as a blocker. But he lacks bulk and raw skills. **FINAL GRADE: 3.0**

17. Scott Tercero, California

6-4⅛ 278 5.18 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Chris Gray, Seahawks
Strengths: Is tall and athletic. Plays with great leverage. Gets in good position and takes good angles into blocks. Consistently reaches out on linebackers and hits moving targets. Has good speed and change-of-direction skills. Has a quick set in pass protection. Moves well laterally. Mirrors and slides nicely.
Weaknesses: Lacks bulk and strength. Doesn't show much initial pop as a blocker. Primarily is a position and wall-off blocker. Has trouble against bull rushes in pass protection. Struggles to get a surge in the running game against bigger, stronger defensive tackles. Had arthroscopic knee surgery in 2000.
Bottom line: Tercero is a good athlete with some upside because of his footwork and agility. But he is vastly undersized and may need to learn to play center to make an NFL roster. **FINAL GRADE: 2.9**


Anthony Davis
BERNIE NUNEZ FOR TSN

18. Enoch DeMar, Indiana

6-3 308 5.30 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Barry Stokes, Browns
Strengths: Is experienced and versatile. Can play guard or tackle. Is powerful. Was a consistent and efficient college blocker. Excels at pass protection in the short area. Moves well laterally. Uses long arms to keep good separation. Has great awareness. Takes good angles into blocks. Is a bit of a positional, wall-off run blocker. Keeps legs driving and gets good hand placement.
Weaknesses: Is on the short side. Lacks ideal footwork to play tackle. Had trouble matching up against speedy edge rushers and must move inside in the NFL. Is a decent athlete but loses effectiveness in the open field. Doesn't show consistent leverage. Lacks lower-body strength. Plays too high at times and lacks explosive hips.
Bottom line: DeMar is a durable, intelligent and efficient lineman. However, he has no physical measurables that stand out.
FINAL GRADE: 2.7

19. Kevin Breedlove, Georgia

6-3½ 318 5.37 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Jermane Mayberry, Eagles
Strengths: Has ideal size for the position and is experienced. Is consistent and reliable. Has great strength. Has the bulk to overpower some defensive tackles at the point of attack when run blocking and would improve with better leverage. Sustains blocks well. Works to finish and shows a mean streak at times. Has adequate short-area quickness in pass protection. Excels at picking up stunts and blitzes.
Weaknesses: Lacks athleticism and has trouble blocking in the open field. Has marginal speed and struggles to reach linebackers. Has some trouble hitting moving targets. Is a liability when forced to match up against quicker, one-gap tackles in pass protection. Loses power when playing too high and becomes mediocre at that point.
Bottom line: Breedlove, a four-year college starter, has superior competitiveness, strength and mauling qualities. He has the right frame of mind for the position but only average physical skills. **FINAL GRADE: 2.3**

20. Tony Terrell, UNLV

6-3¼ 309 5.55 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Matt O'Dwyer, Bengals
Strengths: Has good size and strength. Is most comfortable in the short area. Run blocks with good leverage and power. Shows good upper-body strength. Comes out of his stance with good leverage and explosion. Explodes from hips. Gets good hand placement in pass protection. Shows strong arms and hands to keep good separation.
Weaknesses: Has limited athleticism. Lacks initial quickness and struggles to get good position against quick, one-gap defensive tackles. Is too slow to set. Doesn't show much lateral movement. Struggles to change directions in pass protection. Lacks range when run blocking. Is marginal on pulls and traps; struggles to hit moving targets.
Bottom line: Terrell is a classic interior mauler but has marginal footwork and struggles when trying to block in the open field. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 21. Sherko Haji-Rasouli, Miami (Fla.), 6-5, 310, 5.50 (40 time) ; **22.** Zach Wilson, USC, 6-4⅝, 296, 5.28; **23.** Morgan Pears, Colorado State, 6-6¼, 313, 5.32; **24.** Anthony Herrera, Tennessee, 6-3⅝, 300, 5.40; **25.** Bryan Anderson, Pittsburgh, 6-4⅜, 321, 5.30; **26.** Joey Gerda, Memphis, 6-4⅛, 308, 5.00; **27.** Marico Portis, Alabama, 6-1½, 311, 5.29; **28.** Ben Archibald, BYU, 6-4, 300, 5.40; **29.** Rob Kellerman, Wyoming, 6-5¼, 301, 5.43; **30.** Shane Hall, South Carolina, 6-6, 305, 5.30.

Centers

The centers class this year is loaded with experienced starters from big-time programs. Of the 11 prospects we gave draftable grades, 10 were from the Big Ten, Big East, ACC, SEC or Big 12. Notre Dame's Jeff Faine, an underclassman, is the only prospect not from one of those five conferences.

Faine and Al Johnson are late first-round or early second-round prospects. Johnson is a slightly better athlete, and Faine is slightly stronger and a better overall player. But neither player has a lot of experience in the passing game or in shotgun situations.

Bruce Nelson, Dan Koppen and Brett Romberg are the only other players who could sneak into Day 1.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Centers taken 7	
Round 1	0
Round 2	1
Round 3	3
Round 4	1
Round 5	0
Round 6	0
Round 7	2

1. Jeff Faine, Notre Dame*

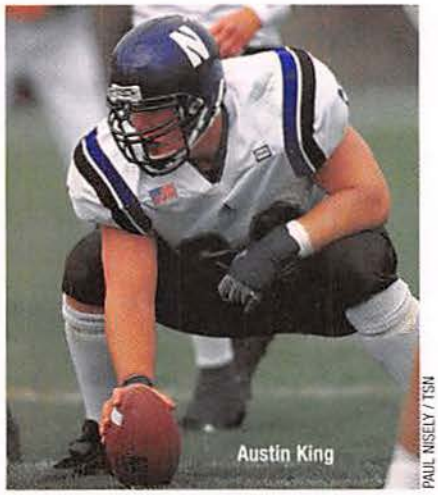
6-2 298 5.08 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Olin Kreutz, Bears

Run blocking: Is a scrappy blocker with a strong upper body. Plays with good leverage. Shuffles well laterally, takes solid angles to blocks and does an excellent job of getting in position. Is at his best when uncovered by a nose tackle. Shows the quickness to help guards, the mobility to reach linebackers and the balance to hit moving targets. **Grade: 8.4**

Pass blocking: Doesn't have great mobility but is quick and rarely takes a false step. Maintains balance and mirrors and slides well with pass rushers. Shows excellent blitz and stunt recognition skills. Might struggle to combat some bull-rush moves but plays with enough leverage and is strong enough in the upper body to hold his ground. **Grade: 8.2**

Initial quickness: This is what separates him from other center prospects. Shows a quick burst after the snap while maintaining good leverage in the running game. Also gets set quickly in pass protection. Rarely gets beat by quick nose tackles. **Grade: 8.3**


Austin King

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Strength: Has a strong upper body. Shows good power and uses his hands to maintain separation. Lacks ideal lower-body strength and can't afford to get off-balance or play too high. **Grade: 7.7**

Mobility: Shuffles well laterally, can mirror and slide with pass rushers, shows good initial quickness and stays balanced in the open field and when picking up blitzes. Will struggle to recover from a false step when going out to chip a linebacker. **Grade: 7.8**

Bottom line: Faine isn't a great athlete and lacks ideal lower-body strength, but he is efficient because of his upper-body strength, consistent positioning and leverage. He should be a solid NFL starter for many years. **FINAL GRADE: 8.1**

2. Al Johnson, Wisconsin

6-4 298 5.05 2nd round

NFL comparison: Kevin Mawae, Jets

Run blocking: Plays with leverage and balance. Is technically sound. Has a great feel for his assignments and for making line calls. Is experienced and knows the angles. Does a nice job of getting out and hitting moving targets. Has good body control and rarely will overextend. Is tough and physical at point of attack. **Grade: 8.2**

Pass blocking: Technique needs polishing, but he's quick, agile and aware. Moves well laterally. Is at his best when uncovered and able to shuffle to help guards pick up the blitz. Could struggle a bit when anchoring against massive NFL nose tackles on the bull rush. **Grade: 7.8**

Initial quickness: Is terrific in the run game. Does a great job with his first step. Also shows above-average quickness in his pass protection set. **Grade: 8.1**

Strength: Is not massive and lacks some power in his lower body. Shows excellent upper-body strength, powerful arms and strong hands. Does a great job with his hand placement and rarely loses a battle once he locks on. **Grade: 7.2**

Mobility: Is a good athlete. Is quick off the ball, shows consistent ability to reach linebackers at the second level and does a nice job of staying balanced in space. **Grade: 7.9**

Bottom line: Johnson is not the biggest nor the most overpowering center prospect, but he is extremely efficient and does a good job of finishing his blocks. **FINAL GRADE: 7.8**

3. Bruce Nelson, Iowa

6-3½ 290 5.40 3rd round

NFL comparison: Jeff Saturday, Colts

Strengths: Has good upper-body strength and initial pop. Is a tactician who usually takes a solid first step and does a nice job of taking proper angles. Has quick feet and shows the ability to redirect in pass pro, as well as hit the moving target in the run game.

Weaknesses: Struggles at times when matched up against a bigger nose tackle. Has trouble anchoring at the point of attack. Gets stood up too often if he doesn't have perfect positioning.

Bottom line: Nelson has quick feet, good technique and was extremely productive both in pass protection and as a run blocker

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-4	310	4.95
NFL minimum	6-1	285	5.30

Centers must be quick enough to hit a moving linebacker without overextending in the running game. They also must be able to move laterally to help the guards in pass protection and blitz pickups. Centers need the size and strength to handle bull rushes and open running lanes against a nose tackle in a 3-4 or a "shaded" tackle in a 4-3.

ON THE RISE: Dan Koppen, Boston College
One of the most consistent centers in the nation the past two years, he put on a clinic at the Senior Bowl.

ON THE DECLINE: Todd Wike, Maryland
He was an efficient center in college, but he's short and slow. Those weaknesses will cost him on draft day.

SLEEPER: Chad Setterstrom, Northern Iowa
Looks like a perfect fit for the position if he can make the transition from small-school right tackle.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Wayne Lucier, Colorado
Moving to guard as a senior showed he's versatile, but he lost a year of experience at center in the meantime.

BIGGEST RISK: Alonzo Ephraim, Alabama
Anchored an overpowering Alabama line in 2002, but his marginal height could be a problem in the NFL.

BEST PASS BLOCKER: Brett Romberg, Miami (Fla.)
Anchoring a line on a team that played in the last two national title games, he never gave up a sack on his own.

BEST RUN BLOCKER: Jeff Faine, Notre Dame
He has the quickness, technique, upper-body strength and toughness to win most one-on-one battles.

BEST INTANGIBLES: Austin King, Northwestern
A starter since he was an 18-year-old freshman, he is probably the most consistent and competitive in class.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

in college. He is not an elite prospect, but he has the skills to develop into a starting center in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 6.4**

4. Dan Koppen, Boston College

6-2½ 298 5.34 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Tom Nalen, Broncos

Strengths: Has a nice first step. Takes good angles on his blocks in the run game. Has a strong upper body and adequate lower-body strength. Will fight to finish his blocks. Does a great job of picking up stunts and blitzes and of helping out his guards. Has a great grasp of how offenses work.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal quickness, speed and agility for a center. Will have the most trouble against one-gap defensive tackles or nose tackles. Has some trouble in space. Is inconsistent when asked to get out and hit a moving target. Will struggle at times to change directions in pass pro against top defenders.

Bottom line: A three-year starter at center in college, Koppen has a good combination of natural skills, experience and leadership. **FINAL GRADE: 6.1**

5. Brett Romberg, Miami (Fla.)

6-2 290 5.20 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Casey Wiegmann, Chiefs

Strengths: Has experience at center, guard and tackle. Has a good feel for assignments and line calls. Rarely makes a mistake in terms of reading a defensive front, blitz or stunt. Has good short-area quickness. Has good initial pop and does a nice job of keeping separation in pass protection. Takes good angles as a run blocker.

Weaknesses: Is not massive and does not overpower defenders in the run game. Lacks ideal mobility and athleticism. Is much better in the short area than when forced to reach the second level to chip a linebacker in the run game. Is somewhat of an overachiever who could have trouble adjusting to the size and speed of the pro game.

Bottom line: Romberg, who was a three-year starter and the undisputed leader of Miami's offensive line, will have to win with angles, technique and toughness to succeed in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 5.3**

6. Wayne Lucier, Colorado

6-3¾ 288 5.15 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Jeff Mitchell, Panthers

Strengths: Has above-average quickness and athleticism. Is at his best when uncovered. Does a good job in space. Takes good angles to his blocks. Is able to reach the second level and hit the moving target. Is a fistfighter type who gets good positioning and uses his hands and upper-body strength to win battles at the point of attack.

Weaknesses: Is somewhat undersized and will have trouble against bigger nose tackles. Lacks lower-body strength and the base to anchor in against the bull rush. Will be overmatched by massive nose tackles and will require help from his linemates at times. Also has had some durability problems.

Bottom line: When playing guard as a senior, Lucier proved he could handle most head-to-head matchups. He is not an elite prospect, but he shows the potential to start at any of the three interior spots in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 4.6**

7. Austin King, Northwestern

6-3½ 292 5.20 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Mike Gruttadauria, Cardinals

Strengths: Is tough, physical and intelligent. Does a good job of making line calls and leading the offensive line. Has average strength and size, but does a good job of using leverage, positioning and technique to match up. Has good feet in the short area. Will be able to mirror and slide in pass protection. Does an excellent job of helping his guards and getting out to the second level and chipping linebackers. Doesn't make many mistakes.

Weaknesses: Does not have great physical skills. Gives up bulk and strength in some matchups and will need help. Does not have the frame to add needed bulk and strength. Probably won't improve much from the player he is now.

Bottom line: King does a great job of getting in position, walling off in the run game and helping out his guards in pass protection. He is somewhat of an overachiever, but he grades out as a mid- to late-round NFL prospect because of his experience, quick feet and leadership skills. **FINAL GRADE: 3.8**

8. Ben Claxton, Mississippi

6-2¼ 290 5.34 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Dave Wohlabaugh, Browns

Strengths: Has adequate bulk and good upper-body strength. Is an overachiever with a great work ethic. Takes good angles in the run game. Gets in position and has good initial pop. Is a fistfighter who will win his share of close-area battles. Has adequate feet in the short area in pass protection. Does a good job of helping his guards and of picking up the blitz. Uses leverage to make up for a lack of strength at point of attack.

Weaknesses: Does not have great NFL measurables or athleticism. Lacks ideal height and bulk. Has trouble anchoring against massive nose tackles on the bull rush. Also has trouble moving them in the run game. Doesn't show much consistency in his ability to reach the second level or hit a moving target.

Bottom line: An outstanding college center, Claxton comes up short in terms of size, strength and athletic ability as an NFL prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 3.3**

9. Todd Wike, Maryland

6-2¼ 305 5.54 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Gennaro DiNapoli, Titans

Strengths: Has overcome minor injuries, displaying durability and toughness in the process. Rarely makes a mental mistake. Takes good angles to blocks. Has adequate short-area quickness and decent pop at the point of attack. Does a good job of using his strong upper body to create separation in the passing game. Is scrappy and physical at the point of attack as a run blocker.

Weaknesses: Is not going to overwhelm many defensive tackles. Sometimes plays too high and loses his base. Lacks the speed and balance in space to consistently reach and chip a moving target. Is more of an overachiever with great intangibles and toughness than he is a physically gifted player.

Bottom line: Wike may never be more than a reserve in the NFL, but he could make for a good bottom-of-the-roster player because of his versatility, work ethic and leadership skills. **FINAL GRADE: 3.0**

10. Gene Mruczkowski, Purdue

6-2¼ 298 5.19 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Jason Ball, Chargers

Strengths: Is intense, feisty, aggressive and intelligent. Rarely misses an assignment and has done a great job of learning the offensive line calls. Takes good angles. Is a relentless blocker. Does a great job of keeping his feet moving and plays with a mean streak. Has very good upper-body strength. Does a nice job of snapping in the shotgun.

Weaknesses: Has average physical skills and lacks upside. Does not have great size and tends to play too high. Has some trouble against bigger nose tackles that play head up. Is quick in the short area but lacks great athleticism and will struggle to consistently chip moving linebackers.

Bottom line: Mruczkowski is quick and takes great angles to his blocks, but he's a below-average athlete who will have some trouble re-directing and blocking in the open field at the NFL level. **FINAL GRADE: 2.5**

11. Alonzo Ephraim, Alabama

6-1½ 312 5.35 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Hank Fraley, Eagles

Strengths: Is thick and plays with a good center of gravity. Stays low and does a nice job of playing with balance. Takes good angles to his blocks and stays under control in the open field. Rarely is overpowered at point of attack and can anchor against the bull rush.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal height. Is not a great athlete. Lacks the speed and quickness to reach the second level. Will struggle against quicker defensive tackles and nose tackles. Lacks ideal initial burst and does not have overpowering size or strength.

Bottom line: Ephraim struggled as a senior with a knee injury but showed toughness by playing through it. His lack of height and marginal athleticism likely will cause him to fall to the bottom of the draft. **FINAL GRADE: 2.2**

Others: 12. Chad Setterstrom, Northern Iowa, 6-3, 298, 5.46 (40 time); **13.** Ben Nowland, Auburn, 6-2, 298, 5.20; **14.** Antoine Mirambeau, Florida State, 6-3⅛, 302, 5.40; **15.** Lucas Brigman, Nebraska-Omaha, 6-0⅛, 316, 5.33; **16.** John Garrison, Nebraska, 6-4¼, 288, 5.22; **17.** Rodney Michael, Fresno State, 6-3½, 300, 5.40; **18.** Joe Iorio, Penn State, 6-2½, 300, 5.25. **19.** Scott Huff, Boise State, 6-1⅛, 292, 5.30; **20.** Cody Johnson, Nevada, 6-3¼, 276, 5.30.

Defensive ends

Defensive end always is one of the most coveted positions in the draft. And this year, it is one of the strongest. Terrell Suggs is the only top 10 pick in the class, but Jerome McDougle, Michael Haynes and Chris Kelsay all could be taken in the first round.

What makes this class so strong is its depth. There are nine ends who could be selected in the second and third rounds—a group that includes end/tackle 'tweener Tyler Brayton, pass-rush specialist Alonzo Jackson and Calvin Pace, who broke Wake Forest's career record for sacks and tackles for loss.

Two of Alabama's three draftable defensive linemen—Kindal Moorehead and Kenny King—are end prospects. Moorehead is a third-round prospect with great size. King is a fourth-round prospect who will have to make the transition from college nose tackle to NFL end.

What's also promising about this class is that it's loaded with college sack artists, such as Antwan Peek (6½ sacks in 2002), Aaron Hunt (9), Nick Burley (10), Jamaal Green (10), Brandon Green (8), Elton Patterson (9½) and Shurron Pierson (8), all of whom should be available on Day 2 of the draft.

2002 DRAFT

Defensive ends taken 23	
Round 1	4
Round 2	3
Round 3	1
Round 4	4
Round 5	2
Round 6	1
Round 7	8

***Denotes underclassman**

1. Terrell Suggs, Arizona State*

6-2⅝ 262 4.65 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Dwight Freeney, Colts

vs. the run: Lacks size but is taller and has better instincts than Freeney. Shows exceptional quickness and upfield burst. Has a terrific nose for the ball and the change-of-direction skills to chase down plays. Has elite speed. Is a sound and powerful open-field tackler. Uses quickness and upper-body strength to maintain separation and get through traffic. Uses hands well and never stops hustling. Struggles when reached by offensive tackles at the point of attack. Lacks great lower-body strength. Is disruptive, instinctive and active enough to make up for a lack of size. **Grade: 8.4**

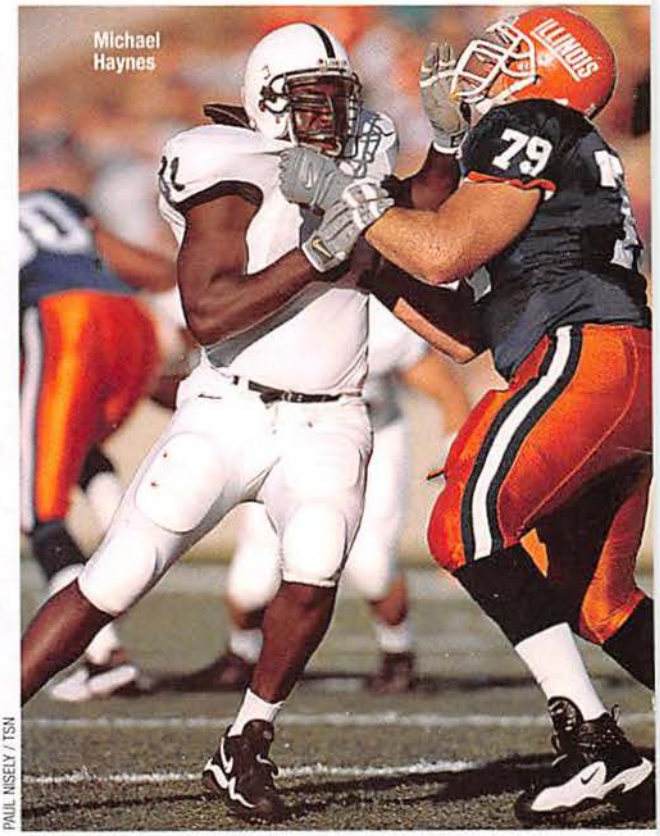
Pass rush: Is faster than both Freeney and the Panthers' Julius Peppers. Shows the top-end speed to consistently turn the corner. Is a gifted athlete with body control. Can stop and start without losing much momentum. Lacks size and power but has solid upper-body strength. Can work back inside because of good footwork and by using club and rip moves. Is relentless. Has exceptional closing quickness and big-time playmaking skills. **Grade: 8.9**

Initial quickness: Is better in this area than any college speed rusher of the past five years. Has terrific anticipation. Gets to full speed in a flash. Comes out of his stance with good leverage and explosiveness. Wins most battles with his first two or three steps. **Grade: 8.9**

Run/pass recognition: Is adequate in this area. Occasionally runs out of plays by getting too far upfield. Struggles to get back inside against the run at times because of size limitations. Changes directions well. Has the burst to recover from false steps. **Grade: 8.5**

Pursuit/tackling: Few players are as aggressive. Is a sideline-to-sideline playmaker. Explodes when closing and is powerful in the short area. Rarely misses tackles and shows great explosion after gathering to make hits. Has a great tomahawk chop pass-rush move and can cause many fumbles from the backside. **Grade: 8.7**

Bottom line: A converted high school running back, Suggs is a bit short for end and needs to add 10 to 15 pounds, but he is a top-10 prospect because of his dazzling athleticism. He is quick and fluid enough to



Michael Haynes

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JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-5	290	4.60
NFL minimum	6-0	245	5.00

Michael Strahan is an example of the ideal NFL defensive end. He has the size and strength to stuff the run, plus the speed and athletic ability to consistently harass a quarterback. Teams that play a 4-3 defense usually put a pass-rushing end on the weak side and a run-stuffing end on the strong side. In a 3-4, both defensive ends are run stuffers because that scheme relies on outside linebackers to pressure the quarterback.

ON THE RISE: Jerome McDougle, Miami (Fla.)
His workout at the Combine boosted his status. He ran the 40 in 4.69 and performed well in skill-set drills.

ON THE DECLINE: Michael Haynes, Penn State
The momentum he generated at the Senior Bowl came to a halt with a subpar workout at the Combine.

SLEEPER: Cliff Washburn, The Citadel
A basketball standout in college, he had 12 sacks and 20 tackles for loss in his only season of football.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Antonio Garay, Boston Coll.
He had five sacks in five games before suffering a broken ankle that finished him for the season.

BIGGEST RISK: Tully Banta-Cain, California
Has potential as a pass-rush specialist. The question is whether he can bulk up enough to play every down.

BEST PURE PASS RUSHER: Terrell Suggs, Arizona St.
Had an NCAA-record 24 sacks and led nation with 31½ tackles for loss in 2002. Had 44 sacks in three seasons.

BEST RUN STOPPER: Kindal Moorehead, Alabama
Although he lacks ideal speed, Moorehead is a fluid athlete with the size of a defensive tackle.

BIGGEST HITTER: Aaron Hunt, Texas Tech
He's athletic, disruptive and powerful. Had 108 total tackles as a senior, including 19½ for loss.

BEST IN PURSUIT: Antwan Peek, Cincinnati
He runs like a running back (4.55 seconds in the 40) and had 22 tackles for loss as a senior.

MOST VERSATILE: Tyler Brayton, Colorado
He played defensive tackle and end in college and could start at either position in the NFL.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

develop into a full-time 4-3 end if allowed to play wide. And he might be athletic enough to play outside linebacker in a 3-4 defense.
FINAL GRADE: 8.7

2. Jerome McDougle, Miami (Fla.)

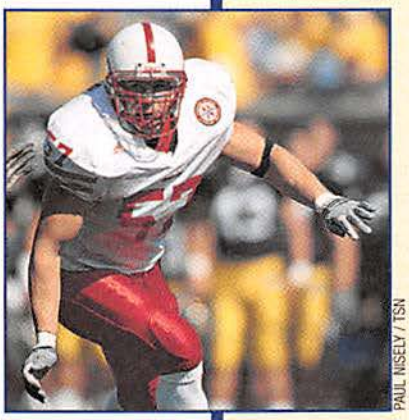
6-0½ 264 4.69 1st round

NFL comparison: Hugh Douglas, Eagles
vs. the run: Has good bulk and plays with leverage. Shows good power for his size. Has a strong upper body. Is most comfortable in the open field. Is a powerful tackler with great closing quickness. Excels at closing off the edge and chasing down plays from the backside. Height and technique are concerns. Gets engulfed at the point of attack at times. Has trouble when teams run at him. Still needs to work on using his hands to create separation and disengage more consistently. Recognition skills are subpar. **Grade: 7.7**
Pass rush: Is explosive and speedy with a big-play flair. Shows a quick first step and great burst around the corner. Has good body control. Changes directions well. Can work back inside. Needs to show more moves but has a strong upper body and can develop power moves with improved technique. **Grade: 8.7**
Initial quickness: Has a quick first step and the initial burst to get around offensive tackles. Anticipates well and consistently gets good jumps off snaps. **Grade: 8.6**
Run/pass recognition: Ball awareness must improve. Gets caught too far upfield at times. Is too concerned with the pass rush, leaving him in poor position to play the run. Needs to improve his technique and footwork against the run. **Grade: 7.5**
Pursuit/tackling: Is fluid with good speed. Is most comfortable when chasing down plays from behind. Shows great closing burst and natural explosiveness. Is an adequate open-field tackler. Shows good short-area power on pass rushes. **Grade: 8.4**
Bottom line: McDougle, whose older brother, Stockar, is an offensive lineman with the Lions, is a bit raw and has room for improvement. After Terrell Suggs, he is the most active and explosive end in this class.
FINAL GRADE: 8.2

3. Michael Haynes, Penn State

6-3¼ 274 4.86 1st round

NFL comparison: Joe Johnson, Packers
vs. the run: Is strong and has good athleticism. Shows adequate upfield burst. Surges into the backfield to disrupt offenses and make plays. Lacks great speed, however, and doesn't chase down enough plays from the backside. Is tough to move when in position. When he gets his feet in place and plays with leverage, he anchors well against run plays right at him. Hands and disengagement skills are improving. Footwork must improve and technique needs polish. Has the right physical skills and made huge strides as a senior. **Grade: 7.8**
Pass rush: Doesn't have elite speed but is a fluid athlete with good initial burst, closing quickness, size and strength. Recognition and moves are somewhat raw, but he flashes explosive upper-body strength. **Grade: 8.3**
Initial quickness: Shows good quickness and burst out of his stance. His anticipation is inconsistent, however. **Grade: 7.8**
Run/pass recognition: Still improving. Is a playmaker. Finds the ball once he penetrates and is fluid enough to stop and start. Isn't always quick to recognize off the snap and gets out of position as a result. **Grade: 7.9**
Pursuit/tackling: Lacks elite speed but shows good closing burst and power. Has big-play potential as an upfield rusher. Shows a good club move and can punch the ball away from the quarterback. Hustles and always seems to be around the ball. Is a good open-field tackler. Shows much explosiveness when timing hits. **Grade: 8.1**
Bottom line: Haynes has enough quickness and straight-line speed to make an impact as an NFL pass rusher. He is raw, must continue to improve his technique and play with better leverage, but his stock rose as a senior because he proved he could take over games. **FINAL GRADE: 8.0**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4. Chris Kelsay, Nebraska

6-4 270 4.71 2nd round

NFL comparison: Grant Wistrom, Rams
vs. the run: Is aggressive. Has a good combination of size and straight-line speed. Has bulked up the past two seasons and played with much better leverage as a senior. Hustles non-stop. Uses hands well to disengage. Has a powerful upper body. Lacks the lower-body strength to anchor and isn't an elite athlete. Doesn't make enough plays in the backfield or show the speed to chase down plays from behind. **Grade: 7.8**
Pass rush: Shows an array of power moves. Has adequate speed off the edge. Has a great work ethic and is relentless. Wins battles with effort, more so than with speed and burst. **Grade: 7.8**
Initial quickness: Comes off the ball with good leverage. Shows explosive short-area power and initial pop. Runs well and is fluid but lacks first-step quickness as a pass rusher. Will struggle to turn the corner against most NFL offensive tackles. **Grade: 7.4**
Run/pass recognition: Excels in this area. Shows a great feel for the position. Has excellent footwork and technique. Reads keys, finds the ball and keeps containment. Is fundamentally sound. **Grade: 8.5**
Pursuit/tackling: Doesn't have elite speed or athleticism but is relentless. Never gives up and works to chase down many plays from behind. Excels at using hands to fight through traffic. Can be an explosive tackler. **Grade: 8.0**
Bottom line: Even though he flashed the ability to dominate in college, Kelsay never

SPOTLIGHT

Chris Kelsay
Nebraska

Following in Grant Wistrom's footsteps led defensive end Chris Kelsay to Bradenton, Fla., the day after Nebraska's loss to Mississippi in the Independence Bowl. Like Wistrom did in 1998, Kelsay began training at the IMG Academy for the NFL draft, participating in drills with names such as dummies, hands-on-air and lay-down bags.

Kelsay works out from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, with breaks for meals and rest in between, to keep his skills sharp. In addition to his workouts were trips to the Senior Bowl in Mobile, Ala., and the NFL Scouting Combine in Indianapolis.

It's a demanding schedule, but as scouts like to say, Kelsay has a motor that never stops. And he wants to make sure that motor is fine-tuned for the draft. Training at IMG is one way Kelsay has followed Wistrom, the former Cornhuskers defensive end who was selected sixth overall by the Rams. And there are others.

Kelsay is an explosive pass rusher who led the Cornhuskers with 5½ sacks last season despite missing most of six games because of a hamstring injury. Kelsay says his favorite thing is rushing the quarterback; he likes to use an outside move, then go underneath his opponent to get there.

Kelsay's strength, similar to Wistrom's, is his nonstop hustle in pursuit of the ballcarrier. Also like Wistrom, Kelsay isn't huge by NFL standards (6-4, 270) and could be a liability in the running game. But one AFC scouting director isn't concerned.

"For the occasional time that (players such as Kelsay and Wistrom) might get caught in the middle of a step and get blocked, they're going to have 10 plays where they get off a block and run to the sideline and knock the hell out of the ballcarrier," he says.

Because of the hamstring injury, Kelsay didn't get much of a chance to knock anyone during his senior season. That's why the time between the bowl and the draft is even more important to him. Though Kelsay is using those weeks to prove himself to the NFL, he already left an impression on his former position coach, Nelson Barnes.

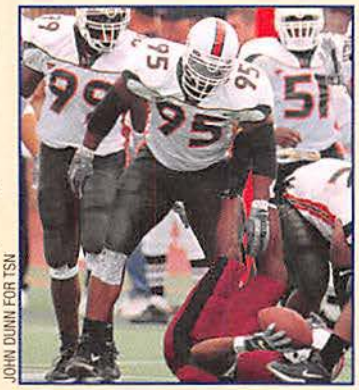
"He would be a win-win situation for any team," says Barnes, who also coached Wistrom and Tony Brackens (at Texas). "He has size, speed. He's a good person, and the ladies say he's easy on the eyes. At least that's what my wife says."

Funny, but that sounds a lot like what has been said about Wistrom. —*George Winkler*

SPOTLIGHT Jerome McDougle, Miami (Fla.)

The 55-yard sandbox. Sled pools. Resistance parachutes. On and on it goes, all in the name of speed and playing quicker and faster than the guy in front of you.

This is how Jerome McDougle became one of college football's fastest speed rushers in years, working and sweating through rigorous offseason conditioning drills with the Miami Hurricanes. His speed work helped him accumulate a mind-numbing 74 quarterback pressures in the last two seasons as Miami's star defensive end and led to his 40-yard dash time dipping to 4.69 seconds.


JOHN DUNN FOR TSN

That's all nice, but McDougle says the reason he became one of the best pass rushers in Miami history, the reason offenses were forced to game-plan away from his side of the field, was that he had to line up across from offensive tackle Bryant McKinnie in practice. McKinnie was a first-round pick of the Vikings in 2002 and played his entire college career without giving up a sack.

He didn't give up one in practice, either.

"Our practices were harder than our games," McDougle says. "I can't think of many guys more talented than Bryant. He pushed me day after day; he made me a better player."

McDougle is a player who essentially came from nowhere—an undersized junior college transfer—and has developed into a lock first-round pick. At 6-0½, 264, he isn't the biggest or most physical down lineman, but he was nearly impossible to block on the edge at the college level. His quick first step put offensive tackles at an immediate disadvantage.

It won't be so easy for McDougle to rush the passer in the NFL, where the tackles have good feet and strong fundamentals and have prepared for every pass-rush move. Will speed be enough?

"He's going to have to do some different things," says one AFC scout. "He's really quick, and that's where it all begins. But guys in this league will get used to that speed, and that will end that advantage."

In other words, McDougle must get bigger and become proficient at a variety of moves to keep from getting swallowed by large, quick tackles. In the NFL, there are 15 or so mammoth tackles, including McKinnie and McDougle's brother, Stockar McDougle, the 6-6, 350-pound right tackle for the Lions.

"It took my brother a little time to get used to the size and speed," Jerome McDougle says. "I don't have any doubt I will, too." —*Matt Hayes*

raised his game and struggled through a hamstring injury as a senior. He likely will develop into a blue-collar starter but not a great NFL player. **FINAL GRADE: 7.9**

5. Tyler Brayton, Colorado

6-5⅝ 269 4.88 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Trevor Pryce, Broncos

vs. the run: Is an end/tackle 'tweener. Is a better physical fit at end but needs time to learn the position. Must play with better leverage. Allows offensive tackles to get into his body too often, which negates his power. Has good quickness, size and strength. Hustles nonstop. Keeps containment. Has good hip explosion. With improved technique, he should develop into a quick and powerful run stopper. **Grade: 7.7**

Pass rush: Lacks ideal speed off the edge but is quick and explosive. Changes directions and chases well. Shows some big-play flair. Has explosive upper-body strength. Shows great burst and initial power off the ball. Has quick hands and a strong upper body. Has much potential with club, rip and swim moves but must learn better technique and add to repertoire. **Grade: 7.4**

Initial quickness: Shows a quick first step and good anticipation but needs to come out of his stance with better leverage. Is quicker off the ball at tackle than at end. **Grade: 7.2**

Run/pass recognition: Excels at finding the ball and changing directions after creating penetration. **Grade: 7.7**

Pursuit/tackling: Doesn't have great speed for an end but is relentless in pursuit. Can chase down plays in the backfield. Shows great closing burst. Locates the ball and disengages from blocks well. Has explosive initial pop as a tackler. **Grade: 7.6**

Bottom line: Brayton padded his stock with a great senior season. With limited experience at end, he must improve his technique and play with better leverage. But he has great potential as a versatile NFL lineman. **FINAL GRADE: 7.5**

6. Cory Redding, Texas

6-4¼ 275 4.85 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Phillip Daniels, Bears

vs. the run: Already has adequate bulk but has room to add more weight. Is active and most comfortable when closing off the edge. Keeps containment well and chases down plays from behind. Has good strength and can hold the point of attack. Needs to play with more consistent leverage. Runs out of some plays. **Grade: 7.6**

Pass rush: Gets good jumps. Is strong and agile. Changes directions well. Has the upper-body strength to club and swim back inside. Collapses the pocket well on bull rushes. Hustles nonstop and is relentless. Lacks good speed off the edge. Will struggle to turn the corner on NFL offensive tackles. Lacks some closing burst. **Grade: 7.7**

Initial quickness: Anticipates well and wins most battles with first few steps. Must come out of stance with better leverage; wastes too much motion and loses too much power by playing upright. **Grade: 7.5**

Run/pass recognition: Needs much improvement. Doesn't always find the ball right off the snap. Takes many false steps. Runs himself out of too many plays. **Grade: 6.8**

Pursuit/tackling: Never gives up on a play. Is a sound open-field tackler who wraps up well. Has outstanding body control. Changes directions well. **Grade: 7.5**

Bottom line: Redding consistently gives everything he has. Poor recognition skills and inconsistent leverage took away from his college production, and his lack of ideal speed will limit his potential as an NFL pass rusher. **FINAL GRADE: 7.4**

7. Dewayne White, Louisville*

6-3 275 4.75 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Darren Howard, Saints

vs. the run: Shows good suddenness and athleticism. Has good bulk. Holds his ground at the point of attack when playing with leverage. Doesn't consistently give a good effort. Gives up on too many plays. Lacks good stamina. Needs to use hands better to disengage from blockers. **Grade: 6.8**

Pass rush: Isn't an elite speed rusher but shows good burst and sudden movement. Can start and stop quickly and work back inside. Is relentless at times. Is an explosive sack artist with good upper-body strength. Lacks ideal height. Must improve moves. Has marginal speed and won't turn the corner consistently in the NFL. **Grade: 8.0**

Initial quickness: Shows good burst but inconsistent anticipation. Gets in trouble without a great jump. Comes out of his stance with good leverage. Shows some short-area power and explosiveness. **Grade: 7.4**

Run/pass recognition: Lacks great instincts and sometimes has trouble finding the ball. Runs out of plays by getting too far upfield. Is consumed with pass rushing and doesn't recognize the run quickly. **Grade: 6.5**

Pursuit/tackling: Doesn't chase down many plays from the backside and could be more effective with better hustle. Has change-of-direction skills and decent speed. Avoids traffic in pursuit. Can be a punishing tackler. Must improve his open-field tackling. **Grade: 6.8**

Bottom line: White has an injury history (knee in high school, ankle in college), but he was productive at Louisville. He could develop into a solid NFL starter if he hones his pass-rush skills. **FINAL GRADE: 7.1**

TSN's PRO FOOTBALL TICKET: www.sportingnews.com/nfl/ticket

8. Clint Mitchell, Florida*

6-6⅝ 255 4.75 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Lorenzo Bromell, Vikings

Strengths: Is tall with the room to add bulk. Plays with good leverage. Uses hands well to disengage from blockers. Shows good run/pass recognition skills and gets through traffic to chase down plays from behind. Is active and never stops hustling. Has decent initial quickness. Shows some burst around the corner. Uses swim and club moves nicely to get back inside. Prepares well for games; he knows opponents' tendencies and reads keys. Doesn't overrun many plays. Keeps containment and seals off the backside.

Weaknesses: Must become bigger and stronger. Has trouble when teams run at him. Lacks the lower-body strength to hold up at the point of attack. Doesn't win many battles with pure speed. Rarely turns the corner against top-flight offensive tackles. Uses several moves to change directions. Isn't powerful or big enough to overpower opponents.

Bottom line: Mitchell, whose brother, Jeff, plays center for the Panthers, is versatile enough to play end or tackle and shows much promise as an active, every-down playmaker. **FINAL GRADE: 6.9**

9. Alonzo Jackson, Florida State

6-3½ 251 4.87 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: John Abraham, Jets

Strengths: Is a good athlete with impressive initial quickness. Shows good burst off the ball and has the speed to turn the corner as an edge rusher. Changes directions well. Can get back inside. Has adequate pop at the point of attack and is stronger than size might indicate. Makes many plays against the run while on the move. Is tough and feisty. Finds the ball well.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal base and bulk against the run. As a pass rusher, he needs to add moves to help disengage blockers. Must improve at using his hands to get off blocks against the run. Is inconsistent as an open-field tackler. Struggles when teams run at him.

Bottom line: Jackson rebounded well from a sprained knee and boosted his stock as a senior. He will be more of a situational speed rusher than an every-down player in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 6.8**

10. Kindal Moorehead, Alabama

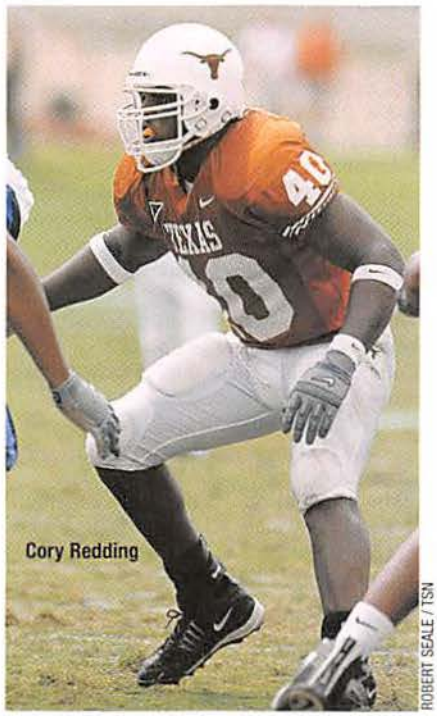
6-1¾ 288 5.00 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Robert Porcher, Lions

Strengths: Is powerful and has good bulk. Is strong at the point of attack against the run. Has good quickness and anticipates the snap well. Has the lower-body strength to anchor against the run. Has strong, long arms. Excels at keeping separation and shedding blocks. Is a load to move. Shows good initial quickness as an interior pass rusher. Shows good closing quickness when chasing.

Weaknesses: Durability is a concern; missed the 2000 season with a torn Achilles' tendon. Is only a two-down end. Lacks the speed and athleticism to consistently apply pressure off the edge. Lacks speed and doesn't make many plays in pursuit. Tends to play too high at times and loses power as a result. Needs to show more interior rush moves. Lacks height and might need to move inside in the NFL, at least on a part-time basis.

Bottom line: Moorehead is one of the heaviest ends in the class. His combination of bulk and mobility makes him intriguing, and his versatility is a plus. He might play both end and tackle in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 6.6**



Cory Redding

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

11. Tully Banta-Cain, California

6-2 255 4.79 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Leonard Little, Rams

Strengths: Is an upfield playmaker. Has terrific initial quickness and instincts. Has an explosive first step and adequate speed to turn the corner. Has quick hands and good upper-body strength. Changes directions well. Shows good lateral movement. Can work back inside. Closes with a burst when pass rushing. Shows some pop when tackling. Can chase down running plays from the backside. Is an adequate open-field tackler.

Weaknesses: May only be a situational player in the NFL. Lacks size for an end and might not be fluid enough to drop into coverage as a linebacker. Is undersized at the point of attack as a down lineman. Struggles to hold his ground when teams run at him. Lacks great speed for an edge rusher.

Bottom line: Banta-Cain, who started his career at Cal as an outside linebacker, was a productive college pass rusher. He has limited physical skills, however, and is somewhat of an end/linebacker 'tweener as an NFL prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 6.5**

12. Calvin Pace, Wake Forest

6-3½ 253 4.82 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Michael McCrary, Ravens

Strengths: Plays bigger than his size and faster than his 40-yard time. Is quick and has good initial burst off the snap. Plays with leverage. Keeps good separation, takes up space and finds the ball against the run. Is a strong, reliable tackler. Shows nice pass-rush moves. Uses double moves well to get back inside. Has explosive initial power and uses swim and club moves to create pass-rush lanes. Has adequate closing quickness and flashes some big-play flair when tackling.

Weaknesses: Doesn't have exceptional size or speed. Will have trouble holding up at the point of attack against bigger NFL tackles. Doesn't hustle consistently. His stamina is subpar, and he becomes much less effective when on the field for more than five or six consecutive plays. Lacks ideal speed to turn the corner as an edge rusher. Doesn't change directions well when pass rushing or pursuing as a tackler. Is a mediocre open-field tackler.

Bottom line: Pace, a dominant 3-4 end at Wake Forest, lacks the ideal size for end in the NFL and won't turn the corner as easily. His open-field struggles would make a transition to linebacker difficult. **FINAL GRADE: 6.1**

13. Kenny King, Alabama

6-2½ 278 4.93 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Renaldo Wynn, Redskins

Strengths: Continues to improve technique and consistency. Has great initial quickness. Is most comfortable when lined up in a gap and turned loose. Is disruptive against the run. Penetrates the line and finds the ball well. Has good size, quickness and power. Improved pass-rush moves and showed consistent penetration as a senior. Has a strong upper body. Does a good job with swim, rip or club moves. Has good closing quickness and is a punishing tackler.

Weaknesses: Durability is a concern. He played defensive tackle in college, but a lack of bulk and base likely will force him to move outside. Has trouble holding up when teams isolate and run at him. Has marginal speed for an edge rusher. Has limited experience at end and must improve leverage at that position.

Bottom line: King was an experienced starter at Alabama, but there are concerns about past injuries (shoulder, neck) and that he primarily played nose tackle. He will need to move to end or be a one-gap tackle in the NFL. He lacks bulk for the inside and speed for the outside. **FINAL GRADE: 5.9**

14. Andrew Williams, Miami (Fla.)

6-1¾ 262 4.55 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Roderick Coleman, Raiders

Strengths: Shows good quickness and speed off the edge. Shows a quick first step and good closing burst. Is a wide rush end; is most comfortable when turned loose on the quarterback. Has both the speed and acceleration to turn the corner. Changes directions well. Excels at chasing down running plays from

the backside and makes many plays in pursuit. Plays with good leverage against the run.
Weaknesses: Is raw and undersized. Durability (knee) is a concern. May never be more than a situational pass rusher. Lacks lower-body strength. Shows poor technique against the run. Is marginal at using his hands and disengaging from run blocks. Is inconsistent with regard to play recognition. Frequently gets too far upfield and outruns plays. Must show better pass-rush moves when he's blocked. Doesn't consistently get back inside.
Bottom line: Williams flashed great athleticism in a rotation with fellow Miami end prospect Jerome McDougle, but he still needs to develop and may be relegated to being a wave player in the NFL.
FINAL GRADE: 5.7

15. Antwan Peek, Cincinnati

6-2½ 245 4.57 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila, Packers
Strengths: Is a playmaker when turned loose upfield. Has outstanding speed to turn the corner. Has explosive upper-body quickness. Excels at using swim and club moves to get back inside. Shows great closing speed and much big-play flair as a tackler. Forces a lot of fumbles. Chases down many plays from behind. Can close off the edge and pursue from the backside.
Weaknesses: Is undersized for an NFL end. Is a much better pass rusher than run defender. Lacks the base and lower-body strength to take on blocks in tight spaces inside.
Bottom line: Peek emerged as a solid end as a senior and has the potential to contribute immediately as an edge rusher in the NFL. He also has the ideal combination of size and speed to cover kickoffs and a knack for blocking kicks. **FINAL GRADE: 5.6**

16. Aaron Hunt, Texas Tech

6-2⅝ 262 4.80 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Regan Upshaw, Raiders
Strengths: Wins most battles with initial quickness. Shows good burst around the corner and great closing quickness. Excels at using his hands to get back inside. Gets upfield and disrupts plays in the backfield. Changes directions well. Is most comfortable when closing down the backside against the run. Chases down plays from behind.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal height for an end. Is more consistent and productive when rushing the passer than playing the run. Gets engulfed by bigger offensive tackles at the point of attack. Lacks lower-body strength and struggles to disengage once reached.
Bottom line: There is much to like about Hunt's athleticism, playmaking skills and approach to the game, but his lack of measurables make him only a mid-round prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 5.2**

17. Nick Burley, Fresno State

6-2½ 240 4.85 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Reinard Wilson, Bengals
Strengths: Shows great initial burst and recognition skills. Is most comfortable when turned loose upfield. Excels at using upper body to help turn the corner as a pass rusher. Is a powerful tackler. Sheds blocks better than measurable skills would indicate. Excels at breaking down plays and tackling in the open field. Never stops hustling.
Weaknesses: Is too short and lacks the bulk to play every down at end. Doesn't have the lower-body strength or base to stack at the point of attack. Lacks ideal speed as an edge rusher.
Bottom line: Burley's lack of ideal measurables limits his NFL prospects. He would fit best as a 3-4 linebacker. **FINAL GRADE: 5.0**

18. Bryant McNeal, Clemson

6-4⅜ 233 4.80 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Lance Johnstone, Vikings
Strengths: Shows good initial quickness and closing burst. Excels at changing directions; can spin and swim back inside. Has good pursuit speed and chases down running plays. Is an adequate tackler with some big-play flair.
Weaknesses: Must add bulk to his tall, lanky frame to even project as a situational rush end in the NFL. Looks too tall to make transition to outside linebacker. Has trouble stacking at the point of attack. Gets engulfed by bigger offensive tackles and has trouble disengaging once reached off the edge.
Bottom line: McNeal projects as a situational 4-3 end or possibly a 3-4 outside linebacker. He is a good upfield athlete with room for improvement. **FINAL GRADE: 4.9**

19. Antonio Garay, Boston College

6-3¾ 293 4.90 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Vonnie Holliday
Strengths: Is strong at the point of attack. Excels at using hands and long arms to keep separation and shed blocks. Wins many battles with his initial quickness. Shows some good power pass-rush moves. Is a solid and strong wrap-up tackler.
Weaknesses: Durability is a concern; missed several games because of various injuries. Has trouble playing with consistent leverage. Tends to get too high at times and exposes body. Lacks great speed off the edge and may struggle to turn the corner in the NFL.
Bottom line: Garay was a potential high draft pick before he broke a leg bone and missed the final six games of his senior season.
FINAL GRADE: 4.7

20. Jimmy Wilkerson, Oklahoma*

6-3⅝ 255 4.70 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Greg Spires, Buccaneers
Strengths: Gets upfield well and makes plays in the backfield. Never stops hustling. Chases down many plays. Shows an explosive first step as a pass rusher. Changes directions quickly. Has good closing quickness and some big-play flair as a tackler.
Weaknesses: Must add bulk and strength. Needs to use hands better to disengage from offensive tackles. Can get overwhelmed at the point of attack. Hasn't developed enough moves. Lacks elite speed and great instincts. Frequently gets out of position by getting too far upfield.
Bottom line: Wilkerson, a converted linebacker, must add 10 to 15 pounds and continue to get stronger before he can contribute in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 4.6**

21. Omari Hand, Tennessee

6-4½ 250 4.85 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Chike Okeafor, 49ers
Strengths: Is a relentless pass rusher with good initial quickness and a burst off the edge. Is a powerful tackler with good closing quickness. Is most comfortable in the open field against the run. Has great body control and shows some change-of-direction skills. Contains well on the backside.
Weaknesses: Lacks experience. Must bulk up and get stronger. Doesn't match up favorably against bigger offensive tackles at the point of attack. Lacks ideal lower-body strength and base. Doesn't have great speed off the edge. Must improve his pass-rush moves.
Bottom line: Hand could develop into a solid wave player but lacks the potential to become an NFL starter. **FINAL GRADE: 4.2**

22. Shantee Orr, Michigan*

6-2 255 4.70 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Bertrand Berry, Broncos
Strengths: Is active, quick and instinctive against the run. Shows good initial quickness and upfield burst. Never stops hustling. Also could play strongside linebacker. Is versatile and athletic against the pass. Has good run/pass recognition. Changes directions quickly. Wins battles because of first few steps. Is disciplined and executes assignments even when overmatched.
Weaknesses: Is undersized. Lacks the lower-body strength to hold the point of attack. Lacks the upper-body strength to disengage once reached by offensive linemen. Must be protected in coverage if moved to strongside linebacker. Isn't fast enough to match up man-to-man against most NFL backs and some tight ends.
Bottom line: Orr lacks the size to be an every-down end but could be a special teams contributor and situational pass rusher.
FINAL GRADE: 4.1

23. Jamaal Green, Miami (Fla.)

6-1¾ 265 4.80 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Derrick Burgess, Eagles
Strengths: Has great initial quickness and burst off the snap. Comes out of his stance low. Has good upper-body strength and shows some pass-rush moves. Has good closing burst and is a sound wrap-up tackler. Chases down many running plays from behind.
Weaknesses: Lacks height and size for end. Struggles to hold his ground when teams run at him. Has trouble disengaging from blocks. Lacks ideal straight-line speed for a pass-rush specialist.
Bottom line: Green lacks experience and ideal measurables. He doesn't have the top-end speed that most NFL situational pass rushers possess. **FINAL GRADE: 3.8**

24. Brandon Green, Rice

6-2 256 4.85 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Willie McGinest, Patriots

Strengths: Shows good burst out of his stance. Beats many offensive linemen with his first step. Shows quick upper body and hands. Has some decent pass-rush moves. Changes directions well. Seals off the edge nicely and chases down many plays from behind.

Weaknesses: Doesn't show great speed off the edge. Won many battles in college that he won't win against quicker NFL offensive tackles. Lacks the height, bulk, strength and base of an every-down end. Struggles to hold his ground and disengage.

Bottom line: Green could be a good fit as a 3-4 rush linebacker, but there are better end/linebacker 'tweener prospects in this class.

FINAL GRADE: 3.6

25. Elton Patterson, Central Florida

6-1⅝ 271 5.03 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Adrian Dingle, Chargers

Strengths: Was a big-play specialist in college. Anticipates snaps and gets off the ball well. Shows great body control, athleticism and change-of-direction skills. Excels at getting upfield, finding the ball and making plays in pursuit. Is a powerful tackler.

Weaknesses: Has good bulk for an end but lacks the right size. Also lacks the speed to consistently turn the corner. Must play with more consistent leverage and take on blocks better.

Bottom line: Patterson is too short and too slow to start at end in the NFL. He will get some late-round consideration because of his experience and past production, but he doesn't have the physical skills to win a full-time job. **FINAL GRADE: 3.4**

26. Demetrin Veal, Tennessee

6-3 278 4.80 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Brandon Mitchell, Seahawks

Strengths: Has good speed and quickness for his bulk. Is aggressive and relentless. Plays with a nasty streak. Has the upper-body strength and mass to compete at the point of attack. Creates good penetration as a bull rusher.

Weaknesses: Is a bit of an end/tackle 'tweener. Doesn't show enough pass-rush moves. Has trouble turning the corner as an edge rusher. Lacks change-of-direction skills. Is predictable when pass rushing.

Bottom line: Veal lacks explosiveness for an end and size for a tackle. At best, he will be a rotation player in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 3.1**

27. Shurron Pierson, South Florida*

6-2⅝ 242 4.62 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Jamal Reynolds, Packers

Strengths: Has good initial quickness and top-end speed. Can chase down plays from behind. Consistently turns the corner. Has a strong upper body. Possesses swim and rip moves. Anticipates well and consistently gets jumps on offensive tackles.

Weaknesses: Struggles when teams run at him. Fits best as a nickel speed rusher. Must improve in coverage to play linebacker. Takes himself out of plays by getting too far upfield. Leaves feet at times, missing open-field tackles as a result.

Bottom line: An undersized college end, Pierson could end up as an outside linebacker who will help as a situational pass rusher and special teams player. **FINAL GRADE: 3.0**

28. Raymond House, Arkansas

6-2½ 267 4.92 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Brady Smith, Falcons

Strengths: Has good bulk, strength and initial quickness. Shows some power with his upper-body swim and club moves. Plays with good leverage and has improved against the run. Keeps containment well and can close down the backside.

Weaknesses: Gets engulfed by bigger offensive tackles. Has marginal speed for an edge rusher. Lacks closing burst. Isn't ideally athletic for the position.

Bottom line: House lacks the physical skills and upside to draw consideration before the final two rounds. **FINAL GRADE: 2.8**

Calvin Pace

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

29. Kai Ellis, Washington

6-3½ 238 4.70 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Tyrone Rogers, Browns

Strengths: Is athletic and shows a good upfield burst. Is most comfortable when turned loose on the pass rush. Has good speed for an edge rusher. Shows suddenness and changes directions well when working back inside. Is relentless and makes many plays on the move and in pursuit. Is a powerful tackler with adequate open-field wrap-up skills.

Weaknesses: Is a 'tweener who lacks an end's size and a linebacker's speed/athleticism. Has trouble holding point of attack when teams run at him. Gets driven off the line by bigger offensive tackles. Coverage skills are marginal.

Bottom line: Because he stood out at the Gridiron Classic, Ellis merits late consideration as a situational pass rusher and special teams contributor. **FINAL GRADE: 2.6**

30. Jake Sprague, Wisconsin

6-2⅛ 279 4.79 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Jared DeVries, Lions

Strengths: Shows good power, size and strength against the run. At end, holds ground when teams run at him. Has a strong lower body and plays with leverage. Has adequate initial quickness and gets in good position. Has some upside as a situational inside pass rusher. Shows good closing burst.

Weaknesses: Has a history of injuries (ankle, shoulder). Is an end/tackle 'tweener: too small to play inside and lacks the speed and athleticism to be a full-time end. Can get engulfed when teams run at him.

Bottom line: Sprague lacks explosiveness as a pass-rushing end and size as a full-time tackle, but his versatility as a potential wave lineman should get him drafted. **FINAL GRADE: 2.3**

31. Cliff Washburn, The Citadel

6-6¾ 268 4.75 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Kavika Pittman, Broncos

Strengths: Has excellent height, a good build, impressive body control and decent speed. Bursts upfield well and shows good initial quickness as a pass rusher. Is coachable. Played one season of college football after completing a standout college basketball career. Showed surprising improvement in terms of moves and technique in one year.

Weaknesses: Very raw. Must improve his leverage, learn to use his hands better and show much better footwork in all facets. Run/pass recognition is poor. Comes out of his stance too high and loses power at the point of attack. Is a marginal open-field tackler.

Bottom line: Washburn is unpolished and needs much coaching. But he is an intriguing late-round developmental prospect who could contribute as a pass rusher and on special teams after a year on the practice squad. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 32. Cornelius Green, Miami (Fla.), 6-4, 250, 4.80 (40 time); **33.** Charles Alston, Bowie State, 6-4¾, 264, 4.68; **34.** LaKendrick Jones, South Carolina State, 6-2⅜, 276, 4.93; **35.** Melvin Williams, Kansas State, 6-2⅜, 260, 4.75; **36.** Osi Umenyiora, Troy State, 6-3, 279, 4.78; **37.** Dan Rumishek, Michigan, 6-2¾, 277, 4.90; **38.** Akbar Gbaja-Biamila, San Diego State, 6-4¾, 288, 4.90; **39.** Demoine Adams, Nebraska, 6-1½, 258, 4.75; **40.** Dennis Quinn, South Carolina, 6-3¾, 263, 4.89; **41.** Tony Brown, Memphis, 6-1¾, 273, 4.83; **42.** Durrand Roundtree, Maryland, 6-2¼, 259, 4.75; **43.** John Turntine, TCU, 6-1⅛, 278, 4.78; **44.** Darrell Wright, Oregon, 6-3⅝, 259, 5.00; **45.** Leif Murphy, North Dakota State, 6-2⅝, 252, 4.81; **46.** A.C. Collier, Baylor, 6-3, 245, 4.95; **47.** Ryan Roberts, Notre Dame, 6-1⅞, 258, 4.90; **48.** Seth McEwen, Oregon, 6-4¾, 271, 5.03; **49.** D.J. Bleisath, Tennessee Tech, 6-3½, 251, 4.86; **50.** Andrew Tippins, Minnesota State, 6-1⅝, 270, 4.87.

Defensive tackles

Defensive tackle is the strongest class in the 2003 draft because, in part, of the surprising decisions by Jimmy Kennedy and William Joseph to stick around for their senior seasons in 2002.

For Kennedy, who continued to improve his technique and was in better shape last season, the decision was a good one. But Joseph, an explosive one-gap player with loads of upside in the NFL, didn't improve much as a senior. And with three underclassmen—Dewayne Robertson, Rien Long and Johnathan Sullivan—projected to be drafted in the first round, Joseph might have lost money by playing another season.

2002 DRAFT

Defensive tackles taken 19	
Round 1	4
Round 2	3
Round 3	2
Round 4	1
Round 5	3
Round 6	3
Round 7	3

Kevin Williams, who likely will be drafted in the first round, might have made the biggest move up the board of any player at the Senior Bowl. Anthony Adams, now a Day 1 prospect, wasn't far behind him. This class isn't short on depth or diversity. Joseph, Kenny Peterson, Jarret Johnson, Nick Eason, Matt Walters and Dan Klecko also are capable of playing end in the NFL. Kennedy, Robertson, Ty Warren, Ian Scott, Matt Leonard and Langston Moore could be two-gap defensive tackles or nose tackles.

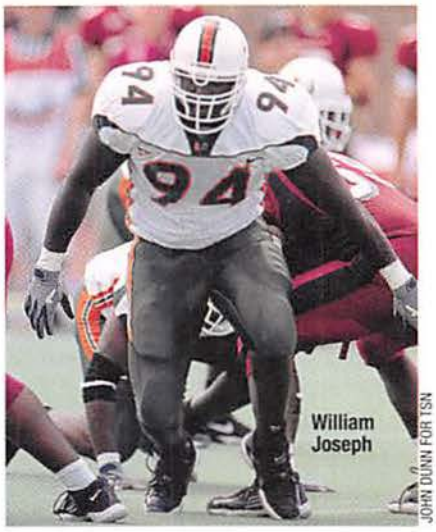
***Denotes underclassman**

1. Jimmy Kennedy, Penn State

6-5 330 5.20 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Keith Traylor

vs. the run: Is massive, powerful and quick. Can control two gaps when playing with good leverage. Has good upper- and lower-body strength. Overpowers most guards. Must play with more consistent leverage and learn to use hands better to shed blockers. Can be disruptive in a one-gap scheme. Runs well and is athletic. **Grade: 8.9**



William Joseph

JOHN DUNN FOR TSN

Pass rush: Shows good initial quickness and footwork. Can collapse pocket as a bull rusher when rested. Shows improved pass-rush skills but is much more productive against the run. Must use hands better to shed blockers. Is quick but not fast. Lacks great change of direction in pursuit and doesn't chase down many quarterbacks. **Grade: 8.5**

Initial quickness: Impressive for his size. Shows good anticipation. Typically gets a quick jump and good position. Comes out of his stance too high when tired. **Grade: 8.8**

Run/pass recognition: Improved in the mental part of game but still is inconsistent, especially when tired. **Grade: 8.6**

Pursuit/tackling: Weight always has been a concern. Must stay in shape to be effective late in games and late in the season. When tired, he leans on blockers rather than working to penetrate or control gap. Runs well and shows good body control but lacks good change of direction and top-end speed. **Grade: 8.5**

Bottom line: After redshirting in '98, when he weighed more than 400 pounds, Kennedy got in shape and was a starter for 3½ seasons. Should be ready to play right away in any scheme. He is a gap-control player with the ability to chew up space. He's an elite player because of his athleticism and mobility. Quick and powerful, he improved his technique and pass-rush skills the past two seasons. Does not always give a consistent effort but has rare physical skills. He should be a top-10 pick. **FINAL GRADE: 8.7**

2. William Joseph, Miami (Fla.)

6-4 305 4.95 1st round

NFL comparison: Warren Sapp, Buccaneers

vs. the run: Is tall with room to add bulk. Is disruptive against the run. Is a one-gap penetrator with great initial quickness. Locates the ball and chases it down. Shows good pursuit skills and is a powerful tackler. Lacks ideal lower-body strength and has thin legs. Must improve his technique and get more consistent leverage. Plays too high when tired. **Grade: 8.2**

Pass rush: Does a great job of penetrating gaps and locating the quarterback. Has a burst through the hole and uses long, strong arms to shed blockers. Has closing quickness. Is able to stop and start quickly to chase the quarterback. Has adequate power moves. Can collapse the pocket with bull rushes. **Grade: 8.6**

Initial quickness: Shows great anticipation and initial burst. Can explode out of his stance with great power, quickness and leverage. Initial quickness and leverage become average when he's tired. **Grade: 8.6**

Run/pass recognition: Shows excellent awareness and change-of-direction skills. Excels at finding the ball and pursuing. **Grade: 8.7**

Pursuit/tackling: Finds the ball quickly and makes a lot of plays in the backfield. Has great speed. Is a powerful tackler with adequate open-field skills. **Grade: 8.6**

Bottom line: Joseph has rare size and athleticism. He lacks ideal lower-body strength and can get held up when blockers get into his

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-4	315	4.90
NFL minimum	6-1	285	5.20

Defensive tackles usually fall into one of two groups: two-gap run-stuffers or one-gap penetrators. A run-stuffer such as Ted Washington doesn't make a lot of plays in the backfield, but he takes up a lot of space and keeps blockers off linebackers. Penetrating tackles such as Warren Sapp are more likely to rush the quarterback and make a big play but tend to be undersized and struggle at times to hold up against the run.

ON THE RISE: Kevin Williams, Oklahoma State
His 14 tackles for loss as a senior and a strong week at the Senior Bowl elevated him to a first-round prospect.

ON THE DECLINE: William Joseph, Miami (Fla.)
He struggled some at the point of attack against the run last season but added 18 pounds by the Combine.

SLEEPER: Tim Love, Harding
Needs to prove he can play with the big boys, but he had 13½ sacks and 27 tackles for loss over last two years.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Rashad Moore, Tennessee
Was expected to have a breakout season in 2002. Instead, his performance was inconsistent.

BIGGEST RISK: Ty Warren, Texas A&M
His weight needs to be monitored, and we fear his effort will slip once he begins to collect a paycheck.

BEST PURE PASS RUSHER: Rien Long, Washington St.
The 2002 Outland Trophy winner registered a team-leading 21½ tackles for loss and 13 sacks last season.

BEST RUN STOPPER: Jimmy Kennedy, Penn State
At 330 pounds, he not only can occupy a double-team but can chase down plays in pursuit.

BIGGEST HITTER: Matt Leonard, Stanford
He's only a mid-round prospect, but he has terrific size and strength and goes all out on every play.

BEST IN PURSUIT: Dan Klecko, Temple
There's a place for him in the NFL because of his quickness, agility, toughness and non-stop motor.

MOST VERSATILE: Kenny Peterson, Ohio State
Was one of the most improved players in this draft class as a senior end. Could play tackle or end.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

body, but he typically beats blockers with initial quickness. Joseph has stayed healthy and shows good stamina but must play with more consistency and add some bulk to his lower body. He has a chance to be a difference maker right away. **FINAL GRADE: 8.5**

3. Dewayne Robertson, Kentucky*

6-3 308 5.15 1st round

NFL comparison: Pat Williams, Bills

vs. the run: Has great size with a strong lower body and a powerful upper body. Shows adequate quickness and initial burst. Drives offensive linemen back with his bull rush. Plays with good leverage and is tough to move. Uses hands well when controlling gaps. Was constantly double-teamed in 2002 and still held his ground against the run. Can be effective in one-gap and two-gap schemes. **Grade: 8.8**

Pass rush: Is improving and penetrates against almost all one-on-one matchups. Comes out of his stance low and with good leverage, quickness and power. Shows explosive initial pop and drives guards back. Must show better second moves. Collapses pocket with power and quickness but is not a great athlete and has below-average speed. Shows just average burst in pursuit. **Grade: 7.9**

Initial quickness: Is one of his biggest strengths. Comes out of his stance low and shows nice footwork and balance. Anticipates the snap and consistently gets a good jump. Has explosive short-area power. Wins many one-on-one battles with initial pop. **Grade: 8.6**

Run/pass recognition: Is disciplined and executes assignments. Works to get in position as a two-gap player. Maintains gap control and shows good technique and leverage. When turned loose upfield, he shows the ability to get to the ball. **Grade: 8.6**

Pursuit/tackling: Makes a lot of plays in tight spaces. Is explosive and never stops hustling. Doesn't make many plays on the run. Has average change-of-direction skills. Is much more effective in a gap-control or power-rush role than when turned loose upfield. **Grade: 8.0**

Bottom line: Robertson struggled a bit last year because of ankle and knee injuries. Has great size and power and shows improved technique and pass-rush skills. Doesn't have elite speed or athleticism but is quick enough to penetrate consistently. **FINAL GRADE: 8.4**

4. Rien Long, Washington State*

6-4⅝ 286 4.90 1st round

NFL comparison: La'Roi Glover, Cowboys

vs. the run: Has decent size and strength. Is a penetrator; gets upfield and disrupts. Has good initial quickness and recognition skills. Finds the ball in the backfield and shows good change-of-direction skills. Chases down the ball. Is tall but plays with good leverage. Lacks bulk. Knee and shoulder injuries have affected his ability to control gaps and take on double-teams. Can be disruptive on the move but struggles in a gap-control scheme. **Grade: 8.0**

Pass rush: Is the best pass-rushing tackle in the class. Anticipates the snap and shows terrific initial quickness. Has good burst and great speed. Shows good closing quickness and big-play flair. Has adequate upper-body strength and shows improved pass-rush moves to get penetration. **Grade: 8.7**

Initial quickness: Wins most battles with a quick first step. Does a terrific job of anticipating the snap. Has explosive initial power and great upper-body quickness. **Grade: 8.5**

Run/pass recognition: Shows good recognition skills. Is a one-gap penetrator who always is working to get upfield and find the ball. Shows good change-of-direction skills to make plays after piercing the line. **Grade: 8.0**

Pursuit/tackling: Makes a lot of plays on the move. Has above-average speed. Shows good closing burst to the ball. Plays under control and shows good change-of-direction skills and body control. Is able to stop and start quickly. Is a powerful tackler with some big-play flair. Is an adequate open-field tackler. **Grade: 8.4**

Bottom line: The 2002 Outland Trophy winner, Long played through a knee injury in 2002 and might need surgery. Also has had shoulder surgery. Is a one-gap penetrator with only adequate size but great quickness and explosiveness. If he can stay healthy, he has a chance to be an impact starter. **FINAL GRADE: 8.3**

5. Kevin Williams, Oklahoma State

6-4¼ 301 4.85 1st round

NFL comparison: Bryant Young, 49ers

vs. the run: Is durable, quick, explosive, powerful and athletic. Is a one-gap penetrator with improved size. Lacks great bulk. Plays too high at times and loses power. Must use hands better to disengage blockers. Finds the ball quickly once through the line and is athletic enough to change directions and chase it. Can be extremely disruptive. **Grade: 8.3**

Pass rush: Is quick and an athletic and explosive pass rusher. Changes directions quickly in the backfield. Shows above-average burst to the quarterback. Is a powerful tackler with good pop. Has some big-play flair. Lacks power-rush moves. Must use hands better to disengage blockers. **Grade: 8.0**

Initial quickness: Shows good initial burst off the snap. Is at his best in one-gap situations. Gets consistent penetration because of anticipation and a quick first step. **Grade: 8.4**

Run/pass recognition: Does a terrific job of diagnosing plays. Locates the ball quickly once through the line. Changes directions and pursues better than most defensive tackles. **Grade: 8.3**

Pursuit/tackling: Has excellent chase ability; has the speed and agility of an end. Changes directions quickly and makes a lot of plays on the move. Is a solid tackler with good short-area power. **Grade: 8.2**

Bottom line: Williams was a durable, productive starter for four seasons. He's a hustling, athletic tackle who improved his value with a

SPOTLIGHT

Jimmy Kennedy
Penn State

Guys who weigh 330 pounds aren't supposed to move well. But there goes Jimmy Kennedy, chasing down a ballcarrier who never expected to be caught from behind by someone so large.

Defensive tackles who possess Kennedy's playmaking ability are rare. A team often is satisfied if its tackles simply hold the line, keeping blockers from reaching linebackers and generally mucking up the works so others can make plays. Sacks or tackles made by defensive tackles are considered bonuses. But Kennedy does that and more.

PAUL NISELY / TSN

Kennedy could be a one- or two-gap tackle. Line him up over a man, and he has the strength and size to control him and the gaps on either side. Line Kennedy up in a gap, and he has the speed and quick first step to beat blockers and penetrate into the backfield.

"He showed me maturity by opting to come back for his senior season," says John Dorsey, the Packers' director of college scouting. "It would have been easy for him to go, but he really improved his draft stock by coming back and playing well."

Kennedy, who has graduated, knew he could get better. To motivate himself last off-season, he carried a list of goals in his wallet. If he ever felt like kicking back and watching TV, he reached for his wallet. One of his goals was getting Penn State back to prominence after it went two seasons without playing in a bowl. The goal was achieved.

In helping Penn State reach the Capital One Bowl, Kennedy displayed the playmaking skills that got him the nickname Grizzly Bear. He made 78 tackles during the regular season, the most by a Penn State defensive lineman since the school played its first season in the Big Ten in 1993.

How dominant was Kennedy? Only four teams rushed for more than 100 yards against Penn State during the regular season. Though it wasn't all Kennedy—he played alongside tackle Anthony Adams and end Michael Haynes, who are certain NFL picks—he was the catalyst.

Though Kennedy has great size and deceptive quickness, he must become more durable. Right now, NFL types don't think he can be an every-down tackle. But that might come with time if Kennedy continues to work on conditioning.

Given the way he worked at Penn State, that's a pretty good bet. "He can be a special player," Dorsey says. —*Tom Dienhart*

strong senior season. He added nearly 20 pounds in the last year but retained his agility and explosiveness. Williams could play a one-gap defensive tackle position, move to end or rotate between both spots. **FINAL GRADE: 8.2**

6. Johnathan Sullivan, Georgia*

6-3 305 5.00 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Richard Seymour, Patriots

vs. the run: Is an above-average athlete. Plays with leverage and controls his gap. Can play in a two-gap or one-gap scheme. Has the size and strength to hold his ground at the point of attack. Shows above-average initial quickness and the speed/athleticism to chase down ballcarriers. **Grade: 8.2**

Pass rush: Shows good initial quickness. Gets consistent penetration and rarely gives up on a play. Changes directions well and has good closing speed. Must increase his repertoire of pass-rush moves. Gets held up too often at the line. Shows enough power to become an effective bull rusher. **Grade: 7.8**

Initial quickness: Shows quick footwork and initial burst. Comes out of his stance with a good pad level. Shows good short-area power. Must anticipate snap better; often is a quarter-count behind teammates and his opponent, nullifying his quickness. **Grade: 7.8**

Run/pass recognition: Shows solid recognition skills. Is consistent and follows through on assignments. Has a nose for the ball when penetrating the line. Maintains responsibility when assigned to control a gap. **Grade: 8.4**

Pursuit/tackling: Pursuit is one of his biggest strengths. Chases down slow-developing running plays from the backside. Never stops hustling. Changes directions better than most his size. Is a powerful tackler with big-play potential, but leaves his feet too often and misses tackles in the backfield. Must be more consistent with his tackling technique. **Grade: 8.3**

Bottom line: Sullivan has good size, quickness and speed. He isn't the most explosive tackle—or the biggest—in this class, but he probably is the most complete and consistent. **FINAL GRADE: 8.1**

7. Kenny Peterson, Ohio State

6-2⅝ 293 4.80 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Ellis Johnson, Falcons

vs. the run: Is a tackle/end 'tweener with good versatility. Has great initial quickness. Is a one-gap penetrator. Uses long arms to disengage blocks and maintain separation. Has a strong lower body and holds his ground well when playing end. Lacks ideal bulk to play inside and struggles to hold up when teams run at him. **Grade: 8.0**

Pass rush: Is quick and athletic. Is at his best rushing from the inside. Uses his hands well. Shows good initial burst. Has above-average body control and changes directions quickly. Shows some closing burst. Lacks speed to be an effective pass rusher at end and struggles to collapse the pocket as a tackle. **Grade: 7.8**

Initial quickness: Showed significant improvement in this area in '02. Anticipates the snap quite well. Comes out of his stance low and with good power. **Grade: 7.9**

Run/pass recognition: Shows good awareness at end and tackle. Keeps consistent containment when playing end. Is disciplined and finds the ball. **Grade: 8.2**

Pursuit/tackling: Is a good open-field tackler. Has quickness and burst in tight spaces. Has adequate change-of-direction skills but lacks top-end speed to pursue the ball. **Grade: 7.7**

Bottom line: Peterson has great skills and versatility. However, he lacks ideal size to play inside and ideal speed to play end. He likely will fit as a one-gap tackle on passing downs who could play end on running downs. **FINAL GRADE: 7.9**

8. Ty Warren, Texas A&M

6-4 298 5.10 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Seth Payne, Texans

vs. the run: Can be extremely quick and difficult to move when healthy, in shape and playing with good leverage. Shows good initial quickness and explosiveness. Has nice size and power. **Grade: 7.3**

Pass rush: Is big and powerful with good initial quickness. Can be a disruptive upfield player when turned loose. Has good body control and change-of-direction skills. Shows some closing burst. Must use hands better to maintain separation and must show more pass-rush moves. **Grade: 7.8**

Initial quickness: Is inconsistent. When fresh, he has elite initial quickness. When tired, he comes out of his stance a quarter-count late and loses leverage. **Grade: 6.8**

Run/pass recognition: Is average in this area. Does a decent job of finding the ball once he moves through the line. Shows decent but not great instincts. **Grade: 7.6**

Pursuit/tackling: Health, weight and stamina have been issues. Tends to wear down. Almost looks like two different players. At times, he shows good burst, body control and change-of-direction skills. At other times, he is sluggish in all facets of the game. Was in the best shape of career as a senior and made many more plays on the run and in pursuit. **Grade: 7.4**

Bottom line: Warren is a tackle prospect but is versatile because of experience at nose tackle and end in A&M's 3-4 defense. He has good size, body control, quickness and power, but he doesn't always hustle and keep his weight in check. He's a complete tackle in terms of his natural skills but is a risk because of a questionable worth ethic. **FINAL GRADE: 7.8**

9. Jarret Johnson, Alabama

6-2⅝ 286 4.84 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Chris Hovan, Vikings

vs. the run: Has good quickness and athleticism. Is a one-gap tackle who could move to end. Is at his best when on the move. Has great recognition skills and chases down the ball. Lacks ideal lower-body strength to hold up at the point of attack. Has trouble disengaging from blocks by big offensive linemen. Gets knocked back and can be taken out of the play if not in good position. **Grade: 7.3**

Pass rush: Has a strong upper body. Uses swim and club moves to get through the line. Shows good closing speed to the quarterback. Is relentless but not a great athlete. Can't collapse the pocket with power. **Grade: 7.1**

Initial quickness: Wins most battles with a quick first step. Comes out of his stance low to compensate for marginal size. **Grade: 7.3**

Run/pass recognition: Shows excellent instincts and awareness. Locates the ball and can change directions quickly. **Grade: 7.4**

Pursuit/tackling: Is not a great athlete but shows good quickness and burst. Never gives up on a play. Is a punishing tackler with good short-area power. Never seems to get tired. **Grade: 7.0**

Bottom line: Johnson is durable and was the Tide's most consistent and active lineman the last two seasons. He never seems to wear down. He is an undersized tackle who could move to end in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 7.2**

10. Nick Eason, Clemson

6-2¾ 295 4.90 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Cornelius Griffin, Giants

Strengths: Is quick and active. Is at his best on the move. Has good speed, initial burst and quickness. Is a one-gap tackle with good awareness and change-of-direction skills. Never stops hustling. Is a powerful tackler and effective in the open field. Has good height and should be able to add bulk.

Weaknesses: Durability always has been a problem. Is undersized and lacks ideal lower-body strength. Has trouble occupying blockers and space in a two-gap scheme. Struggles to hold his ground at the point of attack. Does not create much of a surge as a bull rusher. Is not an elite athlete and lacks explosive qualities.

Bottom line: Eason, who played end and tackle at Clemson, endured ACL, ankle and Achilles' tendon injuries and an irregular heartbeat in college. When healthy, he's an intriguing prospect. Was Clemson's emotional leader and never stops hustling. Is quick, active and technically sound. But he's a bit of a 'tweener and not great in any one area. **FINAL GRADE: 6.9**

11. Eric Manning, Oregon State

6-0⅞ 294 5.15 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Damione Lewis, Rams

Strengths: Is a one-gap tackle with great initial quickness. Plays with good leverage. Keeps a low center of gravity. Has good technique. Shows explosive burst. Has an array of pass-rush moves. Has improved upper-body strength. Excels at using arms to rip, club and swim past guards. Is a powerful tackler with some big-play flair. Never stops hustling.

Weaknesses: Lack of height and marginal speed are concerns. Has trouble against massive guards and power running games. Struggles if forced to anchor. Gets engulfed at times. Keeping weight on is a battle.

Bottom line: Manning is short and doesn't offer much athleticism as a one-gap player, but he plays low and shows great initial quickness, instincts, hustle, upper-body strength and awareness. **FINAL GRADE: 6.8**

12. Anthony Adams, Penn State

5-11 290 5.30 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Josh Williams, Colts

Strengths: Has great leverage and lower-body

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strength. Shows good initial quickness. Gets off the ball and penetrates with power. Is tough to move for run blockers. Plays with a low center of gravity. Has good footwork and surprising agility for his frame. Finds the ball well in the backfield. Never stops hustling.
Weaknesses: Lack of ideal height is a major concern. Lacks both great speed and the burst to create a consistent inside rush as a one-gap tackle. Controlled gaps with power in college but will get engulfed more in the NFL because of his lack of size. Must show better pass-rush moves and use hands better to disengage from blocks.
Bottom line: Adams benefited from playing next to top tackle prospect Jimmy Kennedy. He improved his value at the Senior Bowl, showing great quickness, hustle and the ability to penetrate. But he is short and lacks the ideal speed to chase. **FINAL GRADE: 6.5**

13. Ian Scott, Florida*

6-3 305 5.05 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Chad Eaton, Seahawks
Strengths: Is a two-gap tackle with good size, lower-body strength and quickness. Plays with superior leverage. Ties up blockers and holds his ground at the point of attack. Shows the initial quickness and burst to play in a one-gap scheme but is most comfortable when called upon to control a gap. Shows some flashes as a pass rusher. Collapses the pocket with power rushes. Gets decent penetration because of his explosive first step.
Weaknesses: Durability is a concern. Isn't very agile. Lacks pass-rush experience and moves. Primarily is a power rusher. Struggles to shed blocks. Has average speed. Spent most of his time at Florida occupying blockers, not penetrating or rushing the passer.
Bottom line: Two knee injuries and asthma limited Scott's college production. He is a good athlete with much upside, but he might have helped himself by returning to Florida, especially after a mediocre junior season. He needs better coaching, more experience and to develop a mean streak. **FINAL GRADE: 6.3**

14. Rashad Moore, Tennessee

6-2⅞ 322 5.10 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Cletidus Hunt, Packers
Strengths: Has a nice combination of size, strength, quickness and power. Has a quick first step. Can knock guards off the line of scrimmage. Is strong at the point of attack. Is tough to move against the run. Changes directions well. Has great strength as a bull rusher. Can penetrate in one-gap situations when fresh and coming out of his stance low.
Weaknesses: His inexperience shows through in inconsistent play, marginal use of hands and lack of leverage. His technique is inconsistent. Plays too high at times and loses power. Lacks pass-rush moves. Has trouble breaking free when guards lock on. Has trouble splitting double-teams; gets frustrated and stands straight up instead of working to get through them. Lacks closing speed as a pass rusher.
Bottom line: Moore underachieved as a senior and doesn't show the closing speed that it takes to become a playmaker at the position. **FINAL GRADE: 5.9**

15. Matt Walters, Miami (Fla.)

6-4 280 4.90 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Tony Williams, Bengals
Strengths: Shows superior quickness, burst and power. Excels at playing with leverage and standing up blockers. Has great lower-body strength. Can disengage and find the ball well. Uses hands adequately. Never stops hustling. Is intelligent and technically sound.
Weaknesses: Is a 'tweener. Lacks the bulk to play tackle and speed/athleticism to play end. Has trouble holding up at the point of attack inside. Lacks the top-end speed to turn the corner as an outside pass rusher.
Bottom line: Walters played tackle his entire college career, but he might be a better fit as a swingman or full-time end in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 5.7**

Rashad Moore
BRIAN WAGNER FOR TSN

16. Matt Leonard, Stanford

6-3 300 5.00 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Steve Warren, Packers
Strengths: Has played 4-3 tackle, nose tackle and end. Can hold ground in two-gap schemes. Has good strength at the point of attack. Shows good initial quickness and decent athleticism. Can burst through the hole and flashes closing quickness. Is a punishing tackler. Can be disruptive against the run. Excels at penetrating, finding the ball and chasing.
Weaknesses: Battled back from injuries in 2000 and '01. Is a bit of a misfit. Has the strength of a two-gap tackle but lacks the ideal size for that role. Lacks the top-end speed to make many plays in pursuit.
Bottom line: Considering Leonard's lack of size and past back problems, there is a real concern about his durability. Even though he doesn't dazzle scouts in any one area, he is a hard-working, versatile tackle who can play in a one- and a two-gap scheme. **FINAL GRADE: 5.4**

17. Colin Cole, Iowa

6-0⅞ 315 5.00 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Lional Dalton, Broncos
Strengths: Has experience at tackle and end. Is fluid, agile and mobile for his weight. Changes directions well. Has a strong upper body. Is a powerful tackler with some big-play flair. Excels at breaking down plays in the open field. Has adequate speed once he gets going.
Weaknesses: Has endured nagging injuries. Is somewhat of a 'tweener. Lacks speed and height to play end. Lacks ideal suddenness and initial quickness to play tackle.
Bottom line: Could develop into a productive wave tackle. **FINAL GRADE: 5.0**

18. Terrance Martin, N.C. State

6-2½ 290 5.15 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Jason Ferguson, Jets
Strengths: Is tough to move in the running game. Is primarily a power player and plays with good leverage. Has solid lower-body power. Can penetrate as a bull rusher. Is physical and aggressive at the point of attack. Uses hands and arms well to keep separation. Is versatile; can play in a one- or two-gap scheme.
Weaknesses: Has had knee and back problems. Lacks speed. Doesn't penetrate much as a one-gap rusher. Lacks burst and isn't adept at changing directions. Doesn't make many plays on the run. Tends to wear down late in games. Looks sluggish at times.
Bottom line: Martin has enough size, strength and initial burst to warrant consideration as a two-gap player. But because he lacks great pass-rush skills and is poorly conditioned, he may be only a rotation player. **FINAL GRADE: 4.8**

19. Dan Klecko, Temple

5-11¾ 279 4.95 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Brian Young, Rams
Strengths: Explodes through gaps. Has good speed. Changes directions well for size. Excels at finding the ball once he advances through the line. Has good closing quickness. Is a powerful tackler with big-play flair. Excels at splitting double-teams. Never stops hustling.
Weaknesses: Is a 'tweener. Lacks the size to be an every-down tackle and isn't fast enough to move outside to end. Has trouble stacking at the point of attack. Has trouble when blockers get into his body. Wears down when teams consistently run at him.
Bottom line: Klecko, the son of former Jets All-Pro defensive tackle Joe Klecko, was productive the past two seasons, but he lacks ideal measurables. His best chance to stick in the NFL is as a situational inside pass rusher. **FINAL GRADE: 4.4**

20. Aubrayo Franklin, Tennessee

6-1½ 285 5.20 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Brandon Whiting, Eagles
Strengths: Is squatty with great lower-body strength. Occupies blockers against the run and is difficult to move. Shows good initial pop and upper-body power. Has adequate quickness.
Weaknesses: Lacks experience and is somewhat raw. Lacks ideal height and size. Doesn't have superior speed or pursuit skills. Must improve as a pass rusher. Doesn't show enough moves. Struggles to change directions. Doesn't make many plays in pursuit.
Bottom line: Franklin, a junior college trans-

SPOTLIGHT

Dewayne Robertson
Kentucky

After a year of battling injury and uncertainty, Dewayne Robertson spent the 2002 season following his bliss.

"I get my joy out of sacking the quarterback," says Robertson, who had five last year.

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

That number may seem modest, but Robertson plays inside, and his job description usually includes run-stopping responsibilities and little else.

That makes him something of a rarity: a big tackle (6-3, 308) who can gobble up ballcarriers *and* get to the quarterback. "He has lots of pass-rush potential for an inside guy," says an NFC scouting director. "He can get to the passer."

Robertson didn't get to many places in 2001, thanks to a series of injuries—to his ankle, shoulder and knee—that kept him out of two games and limited his effectiveness all season.

"I was worried about my knee bothering me one week and something else the next," Robertson says. "(In 2002), I just went out and played."

The key to Robertson's success is a combination of fast feet and powerful girth. Anyone who saw him dance his way to a 9-yard interception return in 2000 against Mississippi State knew the Wildcats were on to something.

"When we recruited him, we saw that he just bounced around like a boxer," says Tom Adams, who coached the defensive line at Kentucky last year but now is at Baylor. "He's an exceptional athlete."

Robertson's speed allowed Adams to use him as a full-bore, two-gap lineman. "We didn't jab step," Adams says. "We put him straight upfield."

The key now is for Robertson to augment his quickness with more moves. Last year, he specialized in splitting the gap, flipping his hips toward the sideline and using a rip or swim technique to get through. When Robertson adds some variations to that maneuver, he'll be an every-down NFL tackle, something all teams covet.

"He's quick and strong and has some explosion," the scouting director says. "He gets good penetration and can find the ball. He's a first-round guy. Is he the best defensive tackle in the draft? No. Is he in the top three? Yes."

Robertson will take that, especially if he can sidestep injuries long enough to prove himself. —*Michael Bradley*

fer, must work on his pass-rushing skills and never may be more than a wave tackle.
FINAL GRADE: 3.4

21. Langston Moore, South Carolina
6-0⅝ 297 5.05 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Kendrick Clancy, Steelers
Strengths: Has superior bulk and lower-body strength. Has surprising initial quickness. Excels at getting into position. Is tough to move. Stays low to the ground. Has good initial pop. Shows the power and leg strength to stand up centers and guards and drive them off the line.
Weaknesses: Is a two-down player. Battled a knee injury in 2001. Wears down if left on the field too long. Is short and has some trouble with taller, bigger linemen. Lacks burst, moves and closing speed as a pass rusher.
Bottom line: Durability concerns and a lack of ideal height and athleticism hurt Moore's value, but he shows excellent hustle, great leverage and sound technique. He could contribute as a wave tackle. **FINAL GRADE: 3.1**

22. Montique Sharpe, Wake Forest
6-2 296 4.91 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Ed Jasper, Falcons
Strengths: Is tough to move when playing with leverage and staying low. Shows upper-body power and quick hands. Gets into position well. Holds ground at the line of scrimmage. Plays with balance. Shows good body control. Worked hard in the weight room to improve quickness, speed and stamina.
Weaknesses: Lacks idea bulk for a two-gap tackle. Doesn't show great burst through the hole. Shows marginal recognition skills. Isn't much of an athlete. Has trouble changing directions. Doesn't make enough plays when moving through the line.
Bottom line: Sharpe never may be more than a rotation lineman, but he warrants late-round consideration because of his physical skills and propensity to improve. **FINAL GRADE: 2.8**

23. Bernard Riley, USC
6-1⅝ 315 4.95 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Junior Ioane, Raiders
Strengths: Has good bulk and power. Is a two-gap tackle who excels at coming off the ball quickly, getting into position, staying low and holding his ground. Has sound lower-body strength. Uses his hands well, has good technique and shows some upper-body pop.
Weaknesses: Had a right knee injury as a junior. Isn't much of a penetrator. Lacks superior recognition skills. Doesn't show burst through the line. Doesn't make many plays in pursuit. Lacks pass-rush moves. Has trouble disengaging and pursuing once locked up.
Bottom line: Riley is one of only a few pure two-gap tackles in the class. Though his durability is a concern and he has lost some explosiveness after his knee injury, he is a good late-round value for a team needing a reserve two-gap lineman.

24. David Upchurch, West Virginia
6-3 283 5.10 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Kelly Gregg, Ravens
Strengths: Is an active one-gap tackle. Shows good instincts and recognition skills. Is technically sound. Bursts through the hole and finds the ball well. Is most comfortable when allowed to shoot the gap and keep active. Hustles non-stop. Chases down many plays in the backfield. Is a strong, reliable tackler.
Weaknesses: Is too small to be an every-down NFL tackle. Lacks the athleticism and speed to move outside to end. Doesn't hold up well when teams consistently run at him. Lacks ideal lower-body strength. Gives up too much size against power running games.
Bottom line: Upchurch lacks the ideal physical skills, but his great work ethic, hustle and fundamentals should bring him consideration as a wave tackle. **FINAL GRADE: 2.3**

25. Lauvale Sape, Utah
6-1¾ 283 5.09 **7th round**
NFL comparison: James Reed, Jets
Strengths: Is a quick, active, one-gap tackle. Has great initial quickness and penetration skills. Shows adequate power and initial pop. Has adequate speed for the position and shows some good short-area closing burst.
Weaknesses: Lacks a great work ethic. Takes plays off. Has marginal height and bulk. When playing too high, he gets engulfed at the point of attack. Looks sluggish at times. Doesn't show consistent anticipation or explosion off the ball.
Bottom line: Sape could develop into a good wave player in a one-gap scheme—if he gives a more consistent effort. **FINAL GRADE: 2.2**

26. Tim Love, Harding
6-2⅛ 323 5.14 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Marcus Bell, Cardinals
Strengths: Is a one-gap tackle with great initial quickness and good agility for his size. Is a disruptive penetrator against the run. Shows burst through the line. Has good body control. Shows some closing speed.
Weaknesses: Has never played against top competition. Isn't in great shape. Must lose some fat and gain some muscle. Lacks lower-body strength. Technique is marginal. Must expand pass-rush repertoire and use hands better to shed. Stamina is poor.
Bottom line: He must slim down, add muscle and improve his technique, but his raw ability and production warrant consideration as a developmental tackle. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 27. Garrett Smith, Utah, 6-2½, 296, 5.13 (40 time); **28.** Rayshun Jones, Southern Miss, 6-1¾, 280, 5.03; **29.** Tank Reese, Kansas State, 5-10⅝, 294, 4.82; **30.** Kris Dielman, Indiana, 6-3¼, 274, 5.00; **31.** Sam Rayburn, Tulsa, 6-2¾, 299, 5.18; **32.** Tron LaFavor, Florida, 6-1¾, 288, 5.10; **33.** James Lee, Oregon State, 6-4½, 315, 5.20; **34.** Jon Clanton, Nebraska, 6-1⅜, 290, 4.92; **35.** Cedric Harden, Murray State, 6-2¼, 309, 5.20; **36.** Ryan Terry, Miami (Ohio), 6-1¼, 349, 5.50; **37.** LaWaylon Brown, Oklahoma State, 6-4⅛, 296, 5.07; **38.** Cedrick Hilliard, Notre Dame, 6-1⅜, 288, 5.10; **39.** Kenderick Allen, LSU, 6-4⅝, 311, 5.28; **40.** Floyd Black, Harding, 6-3½, 304, 5.18.

Outside linebackers

This might be the weakest position in the draft. Boss Bailey, brother of Redskins cornerback Champ Bailey, is the only exceptional talent at outside linebacker. LaMarcus McDonald, the next best player, can take over a game because of his range and athleticism, but he doesn't have Bailey's speed and showed up at the Senior Bowl weighing just 209 pounds.

The only reason this class doesn't get a failing grade is because there are nine prospects in Rounds 3 through 5 with an upside. Of that group, Nick Barnett, Pisa Tinoisamoa, Eddie Moore and Cie Grant could just as easily move to strong safety in the NFL because of their less than adequate size.

2002 DRAFT

Outside linebackers taken 20	
Round 1	1
Round 2	2
Round 3	6
Round 4	3
Round 5	3
Round 6	3
Round 7	2

*Denotes underclassman

1. Boss Bailey, Georgia

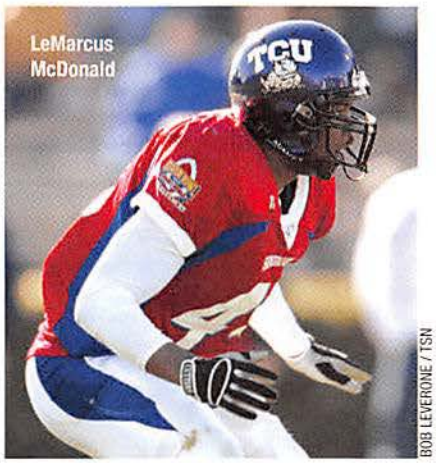
6-2¾ 230 4.56 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Derrick Brooks, Buccaneers

vs. inside run: Allows too many blockers to get into his body. Tends to play too high, losing power at the point of attack. Misses more tackles inside than outside. Is quick and has good closing speed. **Grade: 7.7**

vs. outside run: Is at his best in the open field. Is fluid with terrific quickness, speed and closing burst. Takes good angles and has a second gear in pursuit. Must learn to use his hands better to shed blocks. **Grade: 8.5**

Blitz/coverage: Has great speed as a pass rusher off the edge. Has the frame, speed and closing burst to develop into a difference-maker. Can cover tight ends, running backs and some slot receivers. Is fluid when turning and making cuts. Has great speed, quickness and lateral movement in coverage. **Grade: 8.7**



LeMarcus McDonald

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Run/pass recognition: Shows good recognition skills and instincts. Gets a good jump on the ball and takes good angles in pursuit. Studies a lot of film and knows opponents' tendencies. **Grade: 8.6**

Pursuit/tackling: Has exceptional speed and range. Chases down plays sideline-to-sideline. Has excellent burst and closing quickness. Is a better tackler in the open field than in traffic. Needs to get better leverage at the point of attack and improve his tackling technique. **Grade: 8.0**

Bottom line: Bailey, who missed the 2000 season with a knee injury, is stronger than ever now. He is a tall, athletic linebacker with room to add bulk. He must be stronger at the point of attack, develop better technique as a tackler and shed blocks better. But he is an exceptional athlete—a safety in a linebacker's body. He is a threat on the blitz and is excellent in coverage. **FINAL GRADE: 8.3**

2. LaMarcus McDonald, TCU

6-0½ 222 5.09 2nd round

NFL comparison: Ian Gold, Broncos

vs. inside run: Is tough and physical. Has excellent range, and closes quickly on inside runs. Shows excellent instincts. Plays with good leverage and explosive power. Struggles when reached by blockers and will get engulfed more often in the NFL. Must use hands better to shed blocks at the point of attack. Runs around too many blockers, taking himself out of plays at times. **Grade: 7.3**

vs. outside run: Excels in the open field. Has excellent instincts and recognition skills. Shows good lateral movement and takes solid angles to the ball. Shows closing burst in pursuit. Is a powerful, technically sound tackler. **Grade: 7.9**

Blitz/coverage: Shows good instincts as a pass rusher and a closing burst to the quarterback. Can be an explosive tackler who forces fumbles. Is better in zone coverage than in man-to-man. Has terrific instincts and gets a deep drop in his zone. Shows a good burst out of his backpedal and closes quickly on the ball in his zone. Lack of top-end speed limits man-to-man coverage potential. Is not real smooth when turning and running. **Grade: 6.8**

Run/pass recognition: Shows excellent instincts. Plays under control. Reads keys well, reacts quickly. Rarely takes false steps and usually is in perfect position. **Grade: 7.6**

Pursuit/tackling: Has excellent initial quickness, good instincts and the ability to find the ball in the backfield. Has great change-of-direction skills. Can stop and start without losing much in transition. Takes good angles to the ball and has a good closing burst. Is a great tackler in the open field. **Grade: 7.5**

Bottom line: McDonald was an upfield playmaker in college but is undersized, lacks great coverage skills and gets into trouble when reached by run blockers. He lacks great speed and bulk, but he has tremendous instincts, initial quickness and toughness. He can be a big playmaker against the run, as an edge rusher and in zone coverage. **FINAL GRADE: 7.4**

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-3	240	4.55
NFL minimum	5-11	215	4.90

In a 4-3 defense, the strongside linebacker typically lines head-up over the tight end. He must be strong enough to hold his ground at the line. The weakside 'backer needs the speed to make plays sideline to sideline and the athletic ability to drop into coverage. In a 3-4, outside linebackers primarily are pass rushers, but they must be big enough to hold up at the line vs. the run and fluid enough to drop into coverage.

ON THE RISE: Nick Barnett, Oregon State
Came into his own as a senior, making 121 tackles—including 20½ for loss—while playing the strong side.

ON THE DECLINE: Eddie Moore, Tennessee
Lacks the height to add much more bulk, isn't fast enough to play safety and had shoulder surgery.

SLEEPER: Tracy White, Howard
Impressed scouts at the East-West Shrine Game, where he showed good speed, range and instincts.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Sam Williams, Fresno St.
Plays too high, has poor technique and never made enough plays for the attention he got at college level.

BIGGEST RISK: LaMarcus McDonald, TCU
His 5.09 40 time and poor workout at the Combine raised questions about how effective he can be.

TOUGHEST VS. RUN: Victor Hobson, Michigan
Has best build and is the toughest of all the outside linebackers when it comes to taking on and shedding blocks.

BEST IN PURSUIT: Pisa Tinoisamoa, Hawaii
He has the toughness of a linebacker and the instincts, quickness and speed of a safety.

BEST PURE PASS RUSHER: Shawn Price, N.C. State
As a senior end, he had 9 sacks and 13 tackles for loss. His NFL role will be as a situational rush linebacker.

BEST IN COVERAGE: Boss Bailey, Georgia
He plays linebacker and weighs 40 more pounds, but he flashes the same instincts in coverage as brother Champ.

MOST VERSATILE: Cie Grant, Ohio State
In addition to playing outside linebacker in college, he was used at safety and cornerback.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

3. Nick Barnett, Oregon State

6-1½ 220 4.64 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Dexter Coakley, Cowboys

Strengths: Has good speed, quickness and change-of-direction skills. Chases down plays sideline-to-sideline and never stops hustling. Shows improved run/pass recognition skills and instincts. Has good closing burst when in pursuit and has developed into a reliable tackler. Has impressive speed and quickness as a blitzer. Has the speed, quickness and ball skills to cover most running backs man-to-man.

Weaknesses: Is somewhat of a outside linebacker/safety 'tweener. Has trouble when reached by blockers in the running game. Must use hands better to shed blockers. Lacks lower-body strength and has trouble against isolation blockers. Has marginal bulk and strength and is a target in the running game.

Bottom line: Barnett is undersized for an NFL linebacker and must add bulk and strength. However, he really improved as a senior, learning how to disengage blocks better and improving his recognition skills. He should be able to add weight and develop into a sideline-to-sideline weakside linebacker. **FINAL GRADE: 6.6**

4. Angelo Crowell, Virginia

6-0 230 4.83 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Jessie Armstead, Redskins

Strengths: Shows more quickness than pure speed. Reads keys and reacts quickly. When lined up at end, he shows a good burst out of his stance. Is tough at the point of attack. Uses his hands well when in pursuit. Is technically sound. Sheds blockers well and finds the ball quickly. Is good in coverage in short zones. Changes directions smoothly and has good hands in coverage.

Weaknesses: Lacks straight-line speed. Has some trouble in pursuit against fast players. Has some trouble in coverage when forced to turn and run with running backs or tight ends. Is average on the blitz. Has average pass-rush moves and lacks closing burst to the quarterback. Lacks superior lower-body strength and gets engulfed at the point of attack at times.

Bottom line: Crowell spent the last two seasons at inside linebacker in Virginia's 3-4 defense. The brother of Lions wide receiver Germane Crowell, he has good instincts, athleticism, toughness and durability. He could play inside or outside linebacker in the NFL, but size is a problem inside and speed is an issue outside. **FINAL GRADE: 6.4**

5. Victor Hobson, Michigan

6-0⅛ 248 4.70 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Eddie Robinson, Bills

Strengths: Is strong with good bulk and adequate speed. Has good strength at the point of attack. Can take on and shed blockers. Has outstanding run/pass recognition skills and is great at disengaging blocks and finding the ball. Is an outstanding tackler and a skilled blitzer. Has a quick first step and is relentless. Chases down plays in the backfield and from the backside.

Weaknesses: Lacks elite speed, and is not capable of matching up in all coverage situations. Is stiff when turning and running with backs and tight ends. Has a slow backpedal.

Bottom line: Hobson has good size for an outside linebacker and could move inside. He doesn't have great speed or height, but he is quick, active and instinctive. He needs a lot of work in coverage but has developed into a blitzing threat. **FINAL GRADE: 6.3**

6. Mike Nattiel, Florida

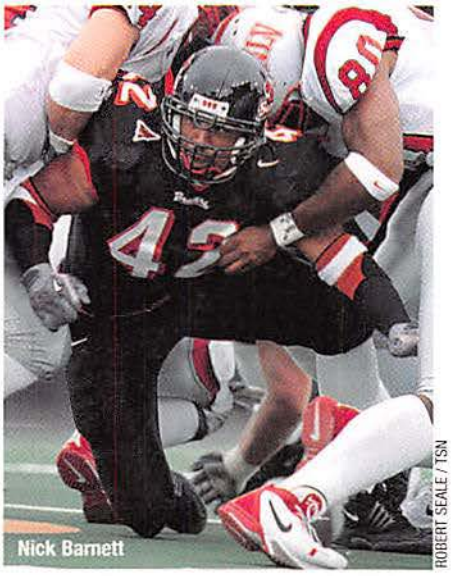
5-11 225 4.60 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Nate Wayne, Packers

Strengths: Is quick and athletic. Has good initial burst. Reads plays and reacts quickly. Chases down a lot of running plays. Is a strong, reliable tackler in the open field. Has some big-play flair. Shows good burst as a blitzer and has good closing quickness. Has the speed, quickness and athleticism to cover running backs.

Weaknesses: Had shoulder surgery in January 2000, but it has healed. Takes himself out of plays at times with false steps or poor angles. Lacks lower-body strength and bulk and has trouble taking on blockers inside. Needs to use hands better to shed blockers.

Bottom line: Nattiel has below-average size but good athleticism, quickness and speed. He is stronger and tougher than his measurables would indicate, but like most undersized weakside linebackers, he has trouble making plays if not on the move in the open field. **FINAL GRADE: 6.1**



Nick Barnett

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

7. Chris Clemons, Georgia*

6-2⅝ 244 4.65 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Keith Newman, Bills

Strengths: Has a good combination of size and speed. Shows good quickness and athleticism. Is powerful at the point of attack. Can take on lead blockers when playing with leverage. Is a solid tackler when in position.

Weaknesses: Takes many false steps and poor angles. Waits for plays to develop and then reacts. Plays too high at times and lets blockers get into his body. Needs to show better hands and shedding ability. Doesn't always break down plays and misses too many open-field tackles. Is mediocre against the pass. Lacks great speed. Doesn't show many pass-rush moves. Has marginal recognition skills and looks lost at times in zone coverage.

Bottom line: Clemons has NFL pedigree—his uncle, Charlie Clemons, is a veteran linebacker—but it was surprising that he came out early. He clearly needed more time to develop. **FINAL GRADE: 5.6**

8. Pisa Tinoisamoa, Hawaii

5-11⅞ 222 4.61 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Dwayne Rudd, Browns

Strengths: Is aggressive, attacking and instinctive. Excels at reading keys and reacting. Is a natural playmaker. Shows great initial quickness and good burst to the ballcarrier. Is a solid, wrap-up tackler and most comfortable in the open field.

Weaknesses: Lacks size and room to add bulk but may not be fast or fluid enough in coverage to move to strong safety. Runs around blockers. Has trouble holding up at the point of attack when reached. Lacks base to take on lead blockers in tight spaces.

Bottom line: Tinoisamoa is a ballhawking playmaker who has the instincts and run-pursuit skills to immediately contribute on special teams and nickel packages in the NFL. With improved coverage skills, he could start at weakside linebacker. He also could develop into a strong safety. **FINAL GRADE: 5.3**

9. Eddie Moore, Tennessee

5-11⅝ 220 4.65 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Warrick Holdman, Bears

Strengths: Is active and aggressive. Shows great quickness and speed. Shows great initial burst and closing speed as a pass rusher. Excels at closing down the backside and chasing down plays from behind. Reads and reacts well. Avoids contact and takes proper angles to the ball. Shows great short-area burst. Excels at using his hands to get through traffic. Is one of the most consistent tacklers in this class.

Weaknesses: Had reconstructive surgery on his left shoulder after his junior season. Doesn't have the strength or bulk to hold up well at the point of attack. Has trouble when reached by tackles or fullbacks on running plays and when taking on lead blockers in tight spaces. Doesn't show enough pass-rush moves to disengage.

Bottom line: Moore is undersized with great speed, quickness and athleticism. He could fit in a scheme like the Buccaneers'—a system where he could run and chase in the open field, but he may never be more than a nickel and special teams contributor. **FINAL GRADE: 4.8**

10. Hunter Hillenmeyer, Vanderbilt

6-3⅞ 241 4.79 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Carlos Emmons, Eagles

Strengths: Has good size and adequate quickness. Is strong at the point of attack. Has good initial burst. Reads and reacts well. Doesn't make many mental mistakes. Uses long arms to keep separation. Shows burst and some pass-rush moves when turned loose upfield.

Weaknesses: Doesn't show great speed as an edge rusher or in coverage. Plays too high at times and loses leverage at the point of attack. Isn't an explosive tackler. At times, he has

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trouble breaking down and wrapping up in the open field.
Bottom line: Hillenmeyer's best fit in the NFL is on the outside. His lack of speed limits his value, but he hustles and has good focus.
FINAL GRADE: 4.4

11. Cie Grant, Ohio State

6-0⅜ 219 4.50 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Barrett Green, Lions
Strengths: Is an exceptional weakside athlete. Shows rare speed and range. Has improved hands and the ability to get through traffic. Is a sideline-to-sideline chaser. Is a good tackler with some pop at the point of attack. Has rare coverage skills.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal size. Must bulk up and continue to get stronger. Gets engulfed at the point of attack when reached. Doesn't have a strong enough lower body to take on blockers straight up. Still must improve recognition skills. Needs to polish his technique.
Bottom line: Grant could play weakside linebacker or move to safety, but he needs time to develop wherever he plays. He also could contribute right away as a nickel and dime linebacker. **FINAL GRADE: 4.1**

12. Jarrod Penright, Texas A&M

6-1¾ 233 4.90 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Rosevelt Colvin
Strengths: Has a quick first step and closes well as a pass rusher. Has an effective club move. Is relentless in pursuit. Shows adequate tackling power and good strength for his size.
Weaknesses: Isn't a great athlete; has trouble turning and running. Lacks speed as an edge rusher. Lacks the athleticism and change-of-direction skills of an outside linebacker.
Bottom line: Penright, who was a two-year starter at Texas A&M primarily as an outside linebacker in a 3-4, can make plays in the backfield. But he may never be more than a special teams player and situational pass rusher in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 3.7**

13. Sam Williams, Fresno State

6-5 235 4.55 **6th round**
NFL comparison: John Thierry
Strengths: Is tall with a great frame. Has great leaping ability and good straight-line speed. Continues to add bulk and get stronger.
Weaknesses: Lets too many blockers get into his body. Must learn to play with more leverage at the point of attack. Must learn to use hands better. Will struggle to turn and run with some of the more athletic NFL tight ends.
Bottom line: Williams is a late-round strong-side prospect, but there are many questions about his potential. **FINAL GRADE: 3.4**

14. Shawn Price, N.C. State

6-0⅞ 223 4.65 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Clark Haggans, Steelers
Strengths: Has good speed as a pass rusher. Changes directions well. Has the speed to turn the corner and ideal closing burst as an edge rusher.
Weaknesses: Has marginal size, strength and instincts. Doesn't show good hands or upper-body moves once reached. Is short and gets engulfed by offensive tackles at the point of attack.
Bottom line: Price's best chance of making it in the NFL is as a situational rush linebacker.
FINAL GRADE: 2.8

15. Rodney Thomas, Clemson

5-11½ 219 4.70 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Mark Simoneau, Falcons
Strengths: Is quick and active on the weak side. Has adequate speed and good lateral movement. Shows good instincts in zone coverage. Avoids blockers well. Is a solid tackler.
Weaknesses: Doesn't have good bulk or lower-body mass. Struggles to disengage. Doesn't make many plays after the blocker has locked on. Will struggle to match up against speedy backs.
Bottom line: Thomas won't develop into an NFL starter, but he has playmaking skills and can play on special teams. **FINAL GRADE: 2.5**

16. Chad Lee, Louisville

6-2 256 4.60
7th round
NFL comparison: Ben Leber, Chargers
Strengths: Is versatile; also has played end. Shows good initial quickness and burst for his size. Has some potential as an edge rusher. Is strong at the point of attack.
Weaknesses: Best NFL fit may be at outside linebacker but has much work to do on recognition skills and shedding ability. Takes many false steps. Needs to improve his pass-rush moves.
Bottom line: Lee must get more fluid in coverage and improve his ability to disengage run blocks, but he could develop into an effective edge rusher. **FINAL GRADE: 2.2**

17. Khalid Abdullah, Mars Hill College

6-2 218 4.59 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Raynoch Thompson, Cardinals
Strengths: Is a sideline-to-sideline chaser with adequate speed and great quickness. Shows good instincts. Avoids contact. Works well in coverage. Moved outside frequently to cover wide receivers in college.
Weaknesses: Has a small-school background and is somewhat raw and undisciplined. Is undersized and takes some false steps. Runs around too many blocks. Needs to improve his hands and ability to take on blocks.
Bottom line: Abdullah must get stronger but has the room to add bulk and enough upside to draw late-round consideration. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 18. Tracy White, Howard, 5-11⅜, 215, 4.54 (40 time); **19.** Jeremy Lloyd, Iowa State, 6-1½, 231, 4.62; **20.** Scott Shanle, Nebraska, 6-2, 238, 4.85; **21.** Chaun Thompson, West Texas A&M, 6-1¾, 232, 4.53; **22.** Recardo Wimbush, Georgia Tech, 6-1, 203, 4.85; **23.** John Williamson, East Carolina, 6-1¾, 230, 4.86; **24.** Sheldon Deckart, Utah, 6-1½, 241, 4.75; **25.** Curtis Randall, Louisiana Tech, 6-2¼, 221, 4.71.

SPOTLIGHT

Boss Bailey
Georgia

The eyes see what the mind can't. Here is Boss Bailey, a rock of a man at 6-2¾, 230, setting the Georgia school record last summer with a vertical leap of 46 inches. Astounding. And no one believed it.

"Looked at me like I was crazy," says Georgia strength and conditioning coordinator Dave Van Halanger.

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Photos, however, don't lie. There is Bailey, months later, leaping over the line of scrimmage to block a field-goal attempt, his waist level with the helmet of a slightly crouched Tennessee offensive lineman.

"Ridiculous," says one AFC scout. "He's going to test off the charts."

Translation: After Bailey, the younger brother of Redskins star cornerback Champ Bailey, completes tests at the NFL Scouting Combine, he's going to make a lot of money. The NFL, especially on defense, is all about size, strength and numbers. Few will grade out like Bailey, an outside linebacker who runs a sub-4.6 40-yard dash and likely will be drafted in the first round.

A college career full of highs and lows—including an ACL injury in 2000—hit a consistent high last season. His performance on the field finally matched his numbers off it.

It was his wife, Amber, and his son, Khalil, who helped him through the pain and doubt of reconstructive knee surgery after he was injured on the opening kickoff of the 2000 opener. Amber gave him day-to-day support; Khalil gave him motivation. "My family is my first priority," Bailey says. "My wife, my son, they're the reason I'm where I am today."

Bailey returned in 2001 and earned second-team All-SEC honors but wasn't the player he had been in his first two seasons, when many believed he eventually would make a bigger impact than Champ at Georgia and in the NFL.

"He wasn't sure of himself," says Georgia defensive coordinator Brian VanGorder. "There was a player that wanted to get out but couldn't. Then he just took off this year."

Bailey's career began again with that unthinkable vertical leap, when he finally realized he was completely healthy. He has been compared with former Georgia linebacker Kendrell Bell, who has developed into one of the NFL's top young linebackers in two seasons with the Steelers. But Bailey is even stronger and has better lateral speed.

"He's going to be a steal," says one AFC personnel director. "Guys will see that injury and back off, but he's going to be a heck of a player in this league." —*Matt Hayes*

Inside linebackers

The addition of underclassman Terry Pierce helped save this class from a failing grade, but it's still a below-average group. Pierce and Gerald Hayes are quality second-round prospects. Pierce is a little bigger and superior against the inside run, and Hayes is more instinctive and a little better against the passing game. But neither player is a blue-chipper.

There are mixed opinions about E.J. Henderson. Ours is that he is one of the best two linebackers—inside or outside—in this draft, and he's ready to start in the NFL right now. His back injury was a concern early last year, but he finished with 175 total tackles and was the most dominant linebacker in the country in the second half of last season.

After those three players, there isn't an inside linebacker we feel great about drafting on Day 1.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Inside linebackers taken 7	
Round 1	1
Round 2	0
Round 3	1
Round 4	2
Round 5	2
Round 6	0
Round 7	1

1. E.J. Henderson, Maryland

6-1⅜ 250 4.80 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Kendrell Bell, Steelers

vs. inside run: Is most comfortable when between the tackles. Has the ideal combination of size, strength and quickness. Shows great instincts. Excels at reading keys. Has trouble at the point of attack at times when not playing with leverage but is big and powerful enough to take on and stand up lead blockers. Excels at using hands and shedding. Is tough and plays with a mean streak. **Grade: 8.5**

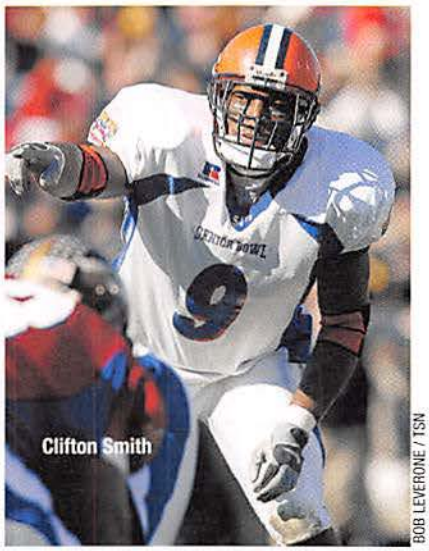
vs. outside run: Lacks top-end speed but is quick and instinctive. Never stops hustling. Plays faster than his 40 time. Takes great angles to ballcarriers. Excels at using hands to sift through traffic. Is an adequate open-field tackler. **Grade: 8.0**

Blitz/coverage: Has great instincts and timing as a blitzer. Has excellent upfield qualities and is most comfortable when turned loose to chase. Shows good closing burst and some big-play flair as a pass rusher. Is only average in coverage. Clearly better moving forward than backward. Lacks elite speed and hips are somewhat stiff when turning. **Grade: 7.8**

Run/pass recognition: This is his biggest strength. Excels at reading and reacting. Rarely takes false steps. Is disciplined and aggressive at the same time. **Grade: 8.6**

Pursuit/tackling: Makes plays all over the field despite marginal speed. Is a powerful tackler. Has great closing burst in the short area. Is a search-and-flow defender. **Grade: 8.1**

Bottom line: Henderson's value has fluctuated a bit because of a 2001 back injury that slowed him down last spring, but he should be ready to start immediately. **FINAL GRADE: 8.3**



BOB LEVERONE / TSN

2. Terry Pierce, Kansas State*

6-3 250 4.75 2nd round

NFL comparison: Rob Morris, Colts

vs. inside run: Has good size and strength. Shows superior instincts. Reads and reacts well. Is most comfortable when attacking the line. Is aggressive, steps up and fills holes. Plays too high at times but can neutralize lead blockers with good pad level. Shows adequate hands to disengage from blocks and sift through traffic. **Grade: 8.2**

vs. outside run: Lacks great speed but has adequate quickness and instincts. Makes quick reads and excels at flowing to the ball. Has more range than 40 time would indicate. Made plays all over the field in college but will struggle to frequently reach the sideline in the NFL. **Grade: 7.8**

Blitz/coverage: Shows good initial quickness and upfield burst. Has a feel for blocking schemes. Shows good blitzing instincts. Bursts through holes and consistently finds the ball. Closes well when pass rushing and in pursuit. Struggles in coverage. Is stiff in hip movement. Lacks the fluidity to turn and run with most running backs. Is only adequate when he drops into zone coverage. **Grade: 7.7**

Run/pass recognition: Shows great instincts. Doesn't take many false steps. Makes up for a lack of top-end speed with quick reads, discipline and good balance. **Grade: 8.1**

Pursuit/tackling: Uses hands well to get through traffic. Flows to the ball, moves well laterally and shows short-area burst and power when closing. Is sound open-field tackler. Lack of speed is a concern; won't make many plays in pursuit in the NFL. **Grade: 7.8**

Bottom line: Pierce might be only a two-down linebacker because of his struggles in coverage, but he has a nice upside and should improve his overall game. **FINAL GRADE: 7.9**

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-3	250	4.55
NFL minimum	5-11	230	4.90

Inside linebackers in a 3-4 and the middle linebacker in a 4-3 share a primary responsibility: stop the run between the tackles. That requires size and strength to take on and shed blocks and athletic ability to slip blocks. Some inside linebackers are replaced on passing downs, but the trend has clearly shifted to every-down linebackers who have the athleticism and speed to stay on the field in coverage situations.

ON THE RISE: Gerald Hayes, Pittsburgh
Capped off his third consecutive 100-plus tackle season with a strong week of practice at the Senior Bowl.

ON THE DECLINE: Eddie Strong, Mississippi
Missed three games because of injury as a senior; struggled to make transition from outside to inside linebacker.

SLEEPER: Merrill Robertson, Virginia
Raw but naturally talented developmental player who moved from end to inside linebacker in '01.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Solomon Bates, Arizona St.
Gained weight and lost speed the last two seasons and wound up being only a part-time starter last year.

BIGGEST RISK: Mario Haggan, Mississippi State
Productive and explosive in college, but marginal speed and overaggressiveness will catch up to him in NFL.

BEST VS. INSIDE RUN: E.J. Henderson, Maryland
Has the best combination of size, strength, quickness and instincts of *any* linebacker in the 2003 class.

BEST VS. OUTSIDE RUN: Lance Briggs, Arizona
Reminds us of the Dolphins' Zach Thomas. Is at his best when chasing down ballcarriers sideline to sideline.

BEST IN PURSUIT: Lawrence Flugence, Texas Tech
Lacks NFL size, but no one made more plays in pursuit last season than Flugence, who had 193 tackles.

BEST IN PASSING GAME: Keyon Whiteside, Tennessee
Flashed a lot of potential against passing offenses, producing two picks and five sacks and defensing seven passes.

MOST VERSATILE: Bradie James, LSU
He's as solid against the passing game as he is vs. the running game, and he can play all three linebacker spots.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

3. Gerald Hayes, Pittsburgh

6-0¼ 231 4.75 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Marvin Jones, Jets

vs. inside run: Is a consistent run stuffer with adequate size and good strength. Plays with leverage. Takes on blockers and disengages from them well. Is most comfortable when attacking downhill. Shows good instincts. Takes a quick first step. Is strong at the point of attack. Shows good initial pop. **Grade: 8.0**

vs. outside run: Shows decent range. Has average speed but is quick and has good instincts. Can reach the sideline against the run. Takes solid angles in pursuit. Wraps up well in the open field and shows good short-area burst and power. **Grade: 7.8**

Blitz/coverage: Pass-rush skills have improved. Shows good timing and adequate closing quickness when blitzing. Is much better attacking upfield than when called upon to turn and run. Lacks ideal speed in man coverage, but a bigger problem is his subpar change-of-direction skills. Looks stiff when forced to keep up with more athletic receivers. Holds up in zone coverage because of instincts and quickness. **Grade: 7.5**

Run/pass recognition: Shows good instincts and ball awareness. Excels at reading keys and reacting without taking many false steps. Doesn't take himself out of plays by overpursuing. **Grade: 7.9**

Pursuit/tackling: Has adequate closing quickness once he gets going. Lacks elite speed but is quick and athletic enough. Never stops hustling. Takes good angles to the ball. Is a great open-field tackler. Shows burst and short-area explosiveness. **Grade: 7.8**

Bottom line: Hayes is a consistent run-stuffing middle linebacker. He may have some early trouble with single coverage in the NFL, but he has enough blitzing and zone-coverage skills to develop into an every-down starter. **FINAL GRADE: 7.8**

4. Bradie James, LSU

6-1⅞ 240 4.71 **3rd round**

NFL comparison: Jamie Sharper, Texans

Strengths: Shows all of the physical skills. Has a good combination of size, strength and athleticism. Is both quick and fast. Is productive when turned loose upfield. Has good strength at the point of attack. Can take on blockers when playing with good pad level. Excels at shedding blockers in the open field and finding the ball. Has good initial burst and closes well as a pass rusher. Never stops hustling. Is a solid, wrap-up, open-field tackler. Breaks down plays well. Is experienced and instinctive in zone coverage. Can drop deep and has good recognition skills. Shows adequate burst out of his backpedal.

Weaknesses: Has had some durability problems. Plays high at times. Looks stiff in hips when not playing with leverage. Has some trouble turning and running in coverage. In the NFL, he will have more trouble reaching the sideline against the run and covering backs. Lacks great explosiveness and short-area power. Isn't a big-play tackler; is more of a wrap-up and drag-down defender.

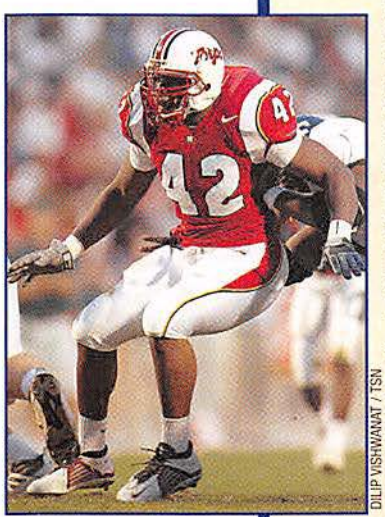
Bottom line: A prolific tackler at LSU, James emerged as a leader as a weakside linebacker as a senior, but his best NFL fit may be at middle linebacker. Inconsistent leverage is a big weakness, but he will improve in that area with coaching. He has the potential to develop into an every-down starter. **FINAL GRADE: 6.4**

5. Clifton Smith, Syracuse

6-1½ 251 4.81 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Jeremiah Trotter, Redskins

Strengths: Is big and strong. Shows excellent raw skills. Is an instinctive run stuffer. Is most comfortable when between the tackles vs. the run. Excels at reading keys and reacting. Is tough at point of attack. Plays with leverage and gets great initial pop. Takes on blockers. Shows the power to shed blocks and find the ball. Is a powerful, wrap-up tackler and an adequate blitzer. Shows decent burst through holes and good closing speed.



DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

Weaknesses: Struggles when called upon to turn and run. Is somewhat stiff when turning. Has trouble with changing directions in man coverage. Lacks a good feel for zone coverage. Doesn't play as fast as his listed speed.

Bottom line: Smith was physical and durable in college. He plays with great toughness and aggressiveness. He is inconsistent but has room to improve with coaching and more experience. **FINAL GRADE: 5.7**

6. Lance Briggs, Arizona

6-0⅛ 247 4.78 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Zach Thomas, Dolphins

Strengths: Is an active defender. Shows great instincts and initial quickness. Gets to the ball. Takes great angles in pursuit. Is aggressive and physical. Excels at getting through traffic. Uses hands well to shed blockers. Has good initial pop and wraps up well in the open field. Has some upside as an interior pass rusher, showing improved instincts and moves.

Weaknesses: Doesn't have great size or speed. Lacks ideal bulk and lower-body strength to consistently hold up in tight spaces. Gets into trouble when reached. Must be on the move to be successful. Lacks ideal speed in coverage. Has some trouble when turning and running.

Bottom line: Where Briggs, an athletic converted running back, will fit best in the NFL

SPOTLIGHT

E.J. Henderson
Maryland

So much uncertainty, so much apprehension. Only months earlier, surgeons were cutting into E.J. Henderson's back and removing painful bone spurs. Now he was scuffling with 300-pound guard Lamar Bryant in a preseason intrasquad scrimmage, a scrap that quickly was turning into a full-blown fight.

Up went Bryant off the ground, and down went his backside—slammed to the turf with the full force of Henderson's fury.

"I lost that one," Bryant says.

"That," Henderson says, "made me feel a lot better about my situation."

A situation that seemed strange and twisted months earlier, when Henderson announced that he would return to the Terps for his senior season despite being one of the nation's best linebackers and a sure high-round selection. The back problems, more than anything, left Henderson with two options: Forgo his senior season and wait for his back to heal with therapy, hoping the NFL doesn't see the injury in pre-draft physicals; or have surgery, return for his senior season and work to return to his pre-injury level of play.

Henderson decided to put his future in his own hands.

"I knew I could control what I had to do to get better," Henderson says. "I couldn't control what happened if I left (school) early."

Turns out returning for his senior season was the best decision Henderson could've made. He was considered a fringe first-rounder last year because he was a one-dimensional player. He was the nation's best linebacker against the run and was solid in blitz situations, but there were questions about his ability to cover in space.

He worked during the summer and throughout the season with the strength and conditioning team at Maryland, striving for more mobility and flexibility and more lateral quickness when dropping in coverage.

"He has showed an ability to cover, and at times, to cover well," an AFC personnel director says. "There are still concerns, but you've got a guy who can plug the middle and stop the run. That's a big first step."

Considering where things began at the end of last season, simply playing without hesitation was a huge milestone. Today, Henderson is more than ready for the next level.

"If you can't cover, they will expose you quickly in the NFL," Maryland coach Ralph Friedgen says. "E.J. can play at any level. Watch the film; you don't have to be Knute Rockne to figure it out." —*Matt Hayes*

is a bit of a mystery. He plays much like the Dolphins' Thomas, and it helped his case that he showed added bulk at the Senior Bowl. If protected by a massive two-gap line, Briggs could be a sideline-to-sideline chase linebacker. He also could make a successful move to the weak side because of his open-field and coverage skills. **FINAL GRADE: 5.5**

7. Mario Haggan, Mississippi State

6-2½ 252 4.88 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Shelton Quarles, Buccaneers

Strengths: Is versatile—he also played outside linebacker and end in college. Is most comfortable when working upfield. Shows good initial quickness and burst. Has excellent size. Is strong at the point of attack. Has long arms and a strong upper body. Excels at taking on blockers, shedding at the point of attack and finding ballcarriers. Is disruptive as a blitzer. Has good instincts and quickness. Slips blocks at the line and excels at tackling. If allowed to shoot gaps, he can make plays in the backfield.

Weaknesses: Lack of speed is a big concern. Much better going forward than laterally or backward. Plays faster than his 40 time but won't match up man-to-man with most backs or turn the corner as a situational edge rusher. Hips are somewhat stiff. Struggles to instantly change directions. Is too slow when turning in coverage. Doesn't have the speed or fluidity to cover in the NFL.

Bottom line: Haggan flashed big-play potential in college, but position changes and a lack of a supporting cast led to an inconsistent career. He lacks top-end speed and coverage skills and plays out of control at times. **FINAL GRADE: 5.4**

8. Tony Gilbert, Georgia

5-11¾ 247 4.85 **4th round**

NFL comparison: Earl Holmes, Browns

Strengths: Has bulk. Has good overall body strength. Is a physical, tackle-to-tackle run stuffer. Shows good recognition skills and instincts. Doesn't take many false steps. Has the power to take on blockers in tight spaces and excels at shedding blocks and finding the ball. Is most comfortable when attacking the run downhill. Is a powerful tackler; wraps up and finishes.

Weaknesses: Is limited athletically. Has poor speed and range. Doesn't consistently reach the sideline against the run. Looks stiff when turning and has trouble when forced to cut back to make a play. Is marginal in coverage. Lacks the change-of-direction skills, athleticism and speed to match up one-on-one against NFL backs. Doesn't show great burst or closing quickness as a blitzer.

Bottom line: Gilbert lacks good speed and shows only average range against the run. He projects as a two-down linebacker who won't consistently hold up in coverage. **FINAL GRADE: 5.0**

9. Matt Wilhelm, Ohio State

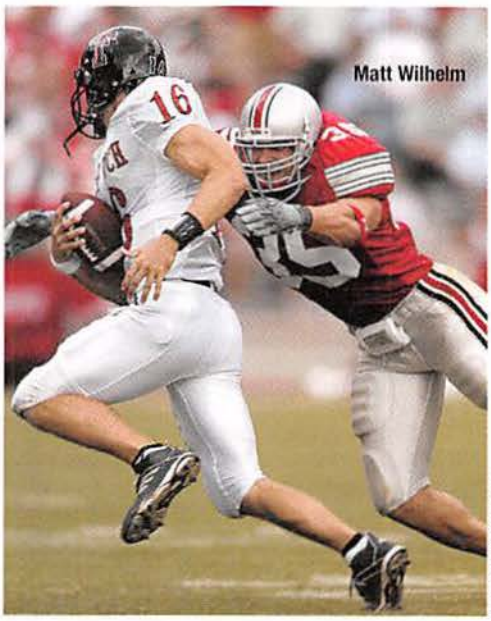
6-3⅜ 237 4.80 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Greg Biekert, Vikings

Strengths: Has good size. Is tall with adequate bulk and good strength. Has adequate straight-line speed. Shows great instincts and solid initial quickness and never stops hustling. Makes a lot of plays on the run. Has the size to take on blockers inside. Is a powerful tackler because of his long wingspan and good technique. Is aggressive. Shows improved run/pass recognition skills.

Weaknesses: Is somewhat stiff in his movements and has some trouble changing directions. Is much better against the run than in coverage; isn't fluid enough to turn and run with most running backs. Shows marginal blitz instincts and not much closing burst to the quarterback.

Bottom line: Wilhelm is an overachiever. He has good size, strength and recognition skills. He makes a lot of plays from sideline-to-sideline because he doesn't take false steps and never stops hustling. He also has good power at the point of attack and is able to shed blocks when playing with good leverage. But he is not a great athlete. He plays too high at times, looks stiff in his movements and will have trouble matching up in the passing game. **FINAL GRADE: 4.6**


Matt Wilhelm

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

10. Lawrence Flugence, Texas Tech

6-0⅝ 237 4.87 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Dat Nguyen, Cowboys

Strengths: Improved every year in college. Has great experience and is durable. Is a sideline-to-sideline middle linebacker who flows to the ball well. Has top-end speed. Shows excellent instincts and reads and reacts well to offensive keys. Is at his best when attacking the ball. Has adequate size and can be a powerful tackler. Flashes some ability as a blitzer. Has good closing speed and change-of-direction skills.

Weaknesses: Must add bulk. Might have trouble holding up inside. Must play with more consistent leverage. Is a liability in coverage. Appears stiff when turning and running; is much better coming forward. Looks uncomfortable in zone coverage.

Bottom line: Flugence was a productive college linebacker who averaged 165 tackles the last three seasons. But he was a much better college player than he is an NFL prospect. He is a sideline-to-sideline playmaker against the run but a liability in coverage, though he has the speed to improve. He must add bulk and strength to match up better at the point of attack. **FINAL GRADE: 4.1**

11. Solomon Bates, Arizona State

6-1⅛ 265 4.87 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Levon Kirkland

Strengths: Is a wide body with great bulk and strength. Can take on isolation blockers in tight spaces. Is most comfortable when working downhill and between the tackles. Is strong at the point of attack. Plays with good leverage. Is tough to move one-on-one. Excels at wrap-up tackling and shows solid initial pop.

Weaknesses: Has marginal speed and range. Doesn't make many plays outside the tackles. Wears down late in games. Is a liability in coverage. Lacks the speed and hips to turn and run with running backs. Doesn't have the change-of-direction skills to hold up in zone coverage.

Bottom line: Bates' draft value plummeted the past two years because he bulked up too much and lost much of his speed and quickness. He no longer has the range to make plays sideline-to-sideline and isn't much of a factor in coverage or as a pass rusher. **FINAL GRADE: 3.9**

12. Mark Brown, Auburn

5-11⅞ 228 4.93 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Derek Smith, 49ers

Strengths: Has a strong lower body. Is most comfortable defending the run between the tackles. Ability to diagnose improved greatly as a senior. Excels at reading keys, staying disciplined and keeping balanced. Shows good initial pop. Plays with good leverage. Excels at fighting isolation blocks in tight spaces. Shows explosive hips. Takes on lead blockers well. Has adequate straight-line speed once he gets going. Is a solid, powerful tackler.

Weaknesses: Had a sprained neck in 2001. Is a marginal athlete. Has adequate speed but isn't adept at changing directions. Can be somewhat stiff when turning. Has some trouble wrapping up elusive ballcarriers in the open field. Isn't fluid enough in coverage. Struggles to move laterally. Gets in trouble when matched up man-to-man against quick running backs.

Bottom line: Brown has good physical skills and was somewhat of a late bloomer, emerg-

ing as a full-time starter as a fifth-year senior. Though he lacks athleticism and experience, he is consistent against the run and shows the potential to develop into a solid reserve. It didn't help that he showed up underweight at the Senior Bowl. **FINAL GRADE: 3.7**

13. Terrence Robinson, Oklahoma State

6-0 239 4.75 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Ronald McKinnon, Cardinals

Strengths: Is athletic and active; chases well all over the field. Is more quick than fast. Shows good burst and closing speed to the ballcarrier. Instincts and recognition skills are adequate. Is most comfortable in the open field. Chases down many plays from behind and gets through traffic defending the run. Plays with good leverage and toughness. Is a punishing tackler for his size. Has some big-play flair.

Weaknesses: Is undersized. Lacks great straight-line speed for a smaller linebacker. Has trouble matching up in coverage against faster backs. Misses some open-field tackles. Doesn't always break down and wrap up. Struggles to stack at the point of attack. Lacks lower-body strength and bulk to consistently take on and shed blockers. Doesn't show much as a blitzer.

Bottom line: Robinson is no more than an average prospect because he lacks athleticism and quickness. **FINAL GRADE: 3.4**

14. Byron Hardmon, Florida

6-1⅜ 234 4.77 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Chris Draft, Falcons

Strengths: Is strong and tough. With experience, he has improved at reading and reacting. Never stops hustling. Excels at keeping with plays. Has a mean streak. Plays with good leverage near the line. Has long arms and a strong upper body. Consistently keeps separation and sheds blocks if a massive lineman doesn't overmatch him. Shows good short-area power as a tackler. Excels at wrapping up and taking down.

Weaknesses: Has mediocre size and must bulk up to match up better near the line. Lacks great speed as a pass rusher. At times, he takes false steps and some poor angles to the ball, causing him to miss open-field tackles. Is a bit long-legged and stiff in coverage. Has trouble turning and running; loses too much in transition.

Bottom line: Hardmon made the switch inside during his senior season. He lacks a great upside, but because of his production last year, he is worth drafting late.

FINAL GRADE: 3.0

15. Keyon Whiteside, Tennessee

6-1½ 235 4.75 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Tedy Bruschi, Patriots

Strengths: Is more quick than he is fast. Has decent straight-line speed. Has good power and upper-body strength. Uses hands well to get through traffic. Shows solid instincts and recognition skills. Stays low; takes on blockers with leverage. Plays bigger than his size. Keeps

Keyon Whiteside

BRIAN WAGNER FOR TSN

great leverage. Shows impressive initial pop. Is most comfortable when moving forward. Has great blitzing instincts. Shows good closing burst. Changes directions well. Stops and starts without losing too much in transition.

Weaknesses: Lacks size and great straight-line speed. Isn't fluid in coverage. Is a bit long-legged and stiff. Has trouble turning and running; won't be able to stick with most NFL backs.

Bottom line: Whiteside, a first-year starter on the outside in 2001, settled in at middle linebacker during his senior season. There are concerns about his durability—he has had various injuries and is undersized—but he has some upside if he can add some bulk. He should be able to contribute on special teams as a rookie. **FINAL GRADE: 2.7**

16. Merrill Robertson, Virginia

6-1 252 4.75 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Orlando Ruff

Strengths: Is a former end with good upfield qualities. Shows superior instincts and moves as an inside blitzer. Has good size. Is physical and strong against isolation blockers in tight spaces. Is tough at the point of attack. Takes on blockers and has the size and base to hold up. Is a powerful, reliable tackler. Can chase down plays from behind if not dealing with traffic.

Weaknesses: Is inexperienced at linebacker. Struggles to change directions at times. Is a liability in coverage. Is much better when moving forward than backward. Has some trouble getting through traffic. Must improve at using his hands. Recognition, technique, instincts and coverage skills all need work. Also must get better at shedding blocks and finding the ball.

Bottom line: Robertson became a full-time starter at linebacker as a senior. His lack of change-of-direction and coverage skills are concerns, but he is strong and tough against the run and has potential as an inside pass rusher. **FINAL GRADE: 2.5**

17. Joe Odom, Purdue

6-0⅞ 243 4.54 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Charlie Clemons

Strengths: Has an intriguing combination of size and speed. Shows good initial burst and quickness. Is a sideline-to-sideline chaser; has the speed to make many plays from behind. Is athletic enough to cover most backs. Has shown flashes as a blitzer. Shows a closing burst. Can be an explosive tackler. Shows good ball skills in coverage.

Weaknesses: Durability is somewhat of a concern; missed some time the past three years with various injuries (most notably a lower-back injury). Recognition skills are mediocre. Takes some false steps at times. Lacks great instincts at reading play fakes. Got away with false steps in college but won't do so easily in the NFL. Doesn't take great angles to the ball. Is overaggressive at times. Misses some open-field tackles.

Bottom line: When he was healthy, Odom gained good experience at Purdue, playing both inside and outside over four years. Considering his speed/size combination, he could play outside in the NFL. But he has much work to do on his technique and the mental aspect of the game. **FINAL GRADE: 2.4**

18. Eddie Strong, Mississippi

6-1⅞ 242 4.86 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Barry Gardner

Strengths: Has excellent size and strength. Is powerful; stacks well at the point of attack. Has a strong upper body. Can shed isolation blocks in tight spaces. Shows good instincts against the run. Is active and relentless. Shows good initial burst. Has explosive short-area power. Is a solid tackler. Is most comfortable in a limited area.

Weaknesses: Missed 2000 season with a stress fracture in his left foot. Plays too high at times, losing power as a result. Allows too many blockers to get into body. Has only adequate speed for the inside. Is marginal in coverage.

Bottom line: Strong fits best as a run-stopping, tackle-to-tackle linebacker and likely will be only a two-down player because of his struggles against the pass. Durability problems and inconsistency also have dropped his value significantly. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 19. Kawika Mitchell, South Florida, 6-0½, 248, 4.75 (40 time); **20.** Drew Wahlroos, Colorado, 6-2½, 235, 4.71; **21.** Ben Mahdavi, Washington, 6-0⅞, 232, 4.81; **22.** David Moretti, Oregon, 6-0¾, 237, 4.77; **23.** Jerry Schumacher, Illinois, 6-1¾, 233, 5.05; **24.** Chris Brown, Hawaii, 5-11¾, 238, 4.63; **25.** Mason Unck, Arizona State, 6-1⅞, 235, 4.90; **26.** Mark Thompson, Richmond, 6-2⅝, 224, 4.52; **27.** Ryan Myers, Akron, 6-1¼, 245, 4.74; **28.** Jason McWilliams, Western Illinois, 6-0⅛, 224, 4.60.

Ratings and text on all players by The War Room.

Cornerbacks

In 2002, we projected that six cornerbacks would be first-round draft picks. The class this year has only half as many candidates who could go in Round 1.

Terence Newman is an elite prospect and undoubtedly will be the first cornerback taken. Not only is he terrific in coverage, he is an explosive return specialist who has some experience at wide receiver.

2002 DRAFT
Cornerbacks taken 28

Round 1	4
Round 2	2
Round 3	6
Round 4	4
Round 5	3
Round 6	4
Round 7	5

Marcus Trufant and Andre Woolfolk are the only other first-round prospects. Trufant lacks elite size and speed, but he could be the most fundamentally sound cover corner in the group. Woolfolk, a converted wide receiver, is nowhere near a finished project, but he has the size, speed and playmaking skills to develop into a good starter in the NFL.

Eugene Wilson and Sammy Davis are aggressive and quick short-area cover corners, but neither player has the ideal size or speed scouts look for in an outside starter.

Rashean Mathis, Drayton Florence, Charles Tillman and Bryan Scott are all 'tweener cornerback/free safety types and have great size and upside, but they lack ideal natural cover skills at cornerback.

The group does have many mid-to-late round prospects who have the skills to develop into starting nickel slot cornerbacks in the NFL, including Roderick Babers, Kevin Garrett, Ricky Manning, Torrie Cox, Donald Strickland, DeJuan Groce, Jason Goss, Asante Samuel, Cedric Henry, Rushen Jones, Korey Banks and Lynaris Elpheage.

Cox, Groce and Elpheage also are terrific punt returners who could perform double duties in the NFL.

***Denotes underclassman**

1. Terence Newman, Kansas State

5-10½ 181 4.37 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Champ Bailey, Redskins

Coverage skills: Lacks ideal height but compensates with great leaping ability and athleticism. Is exceptionally fluid for how fast he is. Shows smooth hips and bursts out of his backpedal. Isn't very physical in coverage. Has lapses in recognition at times but catches up and closes well. Shows impeccable timing. **Grade: 8.8**

Run/pass recognition: Was more of a track star early in college but improved greatly in this area the past two seasons. Like most gamblers, gets out of position at times but excels at changing directions and catching up. Is a natural in man coverage. Awareness should continue to improve. **Grade: 8.4**

Closing speed: Has a great combination of quickness, change of direction and top-end speed. Closes well when the ball is in air. Shows outstanding short-area quickness. **Grade: 8.7**

Ball skills: Has the hands of a wide receiver. Is aggressive when the ball is in air. Is a natural playmaker. **Grade: 8.7**

Run support: This is a big weakness. Lacks ideal size and isn't physical enough. Is a drag-down tackler. Shows marginal strength at the point of attack and subpar tackling skills. **Grade: 7.8**

Bottom line: Newman, a Big 12 track champion in the 100 meters (outdoors) and 60 meters (indoors), has emerged as the top cornerback in the class. In addition to his defensive responsibilities, he shined on special teams—returning and blocking kicks. He

Marcus Trufant

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-1	205	4.40
NFL minimum	5-9	175	4.55

A cornerback must have outstanding athletic ability, explosive quickness and excellent footwork. He must be able to play zone and man coverage. Ideally, a starter on the outside also has the size and strength to handle bigger and stronger receivers in the red zone and down the field, and he must be adequate vs. the run. Nickel corners can be smaller and lack ideal top-end speed because they typically cover a shorter area.

ON THE RISE: Marcus Trufant, Washington State
Smooth in coverage, he capped off a strong senior season with an impressive showing at the Senior Bowl.

ON THE DECLINE: Andre Woolfolk, Oklahoma
Poor recognition skills were exposed when he gave up too many big plays in second half of senior season.

SLEEPER: Ivan Taylor, Louisiana-Lafayette
Switched from running back to corner as senior and showed speed and athleticism that make him a prospect.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Cedric Henry, Michigan St.
Academic problems forced him to miss 2001 season. Did not look as smooth or as comfortable upon his return.

BIGGEST RISK: Eugene Wilson, Illinois
His lack of ideal size and speed might limit him to playing a sub-package role in the NFL.

BEST IN MAN COVERAGE: Terence Newman, Kansas St.
His size, speed, quickness, leaping ability and ball skills make him the most complete package in this group.

BEST PRESS TECHNIQUE: Dennis Weathersby, Oregon St.
Was inconsistent in college, but the thing he does best is press receivers at line and take them out of their routes.

BEST IN ZONE COVERAGE: Shane Walton, Notre Dame
Lacks the speed of a man-to-man cover corner but could be a starter in NFL if he's protected in zone coverage.

TOUGHEST VS. RUN: Donald Strickland, Colorado
Although he doesn't look the part, he is tough in run support. He made 109 tackles as a senior.

PLAYMAKING POTENTIAL: Rashean Mathis, B.-Cookman
Finished his career with a combined 29 interceptions (14 as a senior) from safety and cornerback positions.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

will be 25 as a rookie and isn't suited for run support, but he has all of the skills of a shutdown cover corner. **FINAL GRADE: 8.5**

2. Marcus Trufant, Washington State

5-10⅝ 186 4.46 **1st round**

NFL comparison: Patrick Surtain, Dolphins

Coverage skills: Has only adequate size; may have some trouble vs. bigger NFL receivers. Is a great natural athlete and a pure cover corner. Gets a nice jump on the ball in zones. Excels at changing directions. Shows burst and quickness out of breaks. Hips are smooth. Can turn and run without losing much in transition. Has good straight-line speed. Finds the ball when it's in the air. Shows great hands and concentration. Is confident and tough. **Grade: 8.5**

Run/pass recognition: This is a big strength. Is aware and shows good feel for zone coverage. Can read quarterbacks' eyes. Doesn't get caught peeking. Shows great natural instincts. **Grade: 8.5**

Closing speed: Shows quickness and fluid hips when turning. Excels at closing. Has some trouble making up for mistakes, however. Lacks a second gear when tracking down deep balls. **Grade: 8.2**

Ball skills: Is a natural playmaker. Shows great short-area burst. Gets good jumps on underneath throws. Shows good instincts and recognition. Times jumps well. Is aggressive when the ball is in the air. Shows great natural hands. **Grade: 8.4**

Run support: Is aggressive and willing but doesn't have great bulk or strength. Isn't a huge factor here but also isn't a liability. **Grade: 7.9**

Bottom line: Trufant, a starter since his freshman year, missed five games with a broken hand as a junior but returned to finish the season strong and didn't miss a game as a senior. He was the smoothest and most consistent corner at the Senior Bowl and is ready to start right away in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 8.3**

3. Andre Woolfolk, Oklahoma

6-1 193 4.43 **1st round**

NFL comparison: Shawn Springs, Seahawks

Coverage skills: Has exceptional natural skills: size, quickness, burst and ball skills. Shows a second gear when closing. Is a terrific leaper. Goes after the ball hard. Shows great natural hands. Excels at finding the ball in the air when turning and running. Has a big upside but is unpolished. Is a bit long-legged; looks stiff when turning at times. May have some trouble against smaller, quicker NFL receivers. **Grade: 8.2**

Run/pass recognition: This is a big concern because of his lack of experience at cornerback. Occasionally makes mistakes and gives up big plays as a result. Doesn't have a great feel for reading quarterbacks' eyes and picking up receivers' tendencies. Takes too many false steps. **Grade: 7.8**

Closing speed: Is adequate in this area. Builds speed as he goes; shows an extra gear when the ball is in the air. Isn't ideally quick when stopping and starting. Loses a little in transition. **Grade: 8.4**

Ball skills: Is a terrific natural playmaker. Shows good instincts when the ball is in the air. Can locate the ball when turning. Closes well, both on the deep ball and in the short area. Is tough, physical and aggressive. Times his jumps well. Uses great hands. **Grade: 8.7**

Run support: Is only average in this area. Has good size and is willing to come up. Is an adequate open-field tackler. Lacks great strength. Isn't a durable athlete; has had knee and ankle injuries. **Grade: 7.8**

Bottom line: Woolfolk also started at wide receiver at Oklahoma but played cornerback full-time as a senior. His coverage skills are raw, and that's why many scouts think he is a better fit at safety. But he will get better with experience and can develop into a solid NFL playmaking corner if a team is patient. In the meantime, he is ready to contribute as a sub-package defensive back and is athletic enough to play many roles on special teams **FINAL GRADE: 8.2**

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

4. Eugene Wilson, Illinois

5-9⅞ 189 4.50 **2nd round**

NFL comparison: Donnie Abraham, Jets

Coverage skills: Has all of the ideal skills but lacks great size and speed. Is more quick than fast. Shows great instincts and awareness in zone coverage. Excels in short-area man coverage. Hips are fluid. Shows great suddenness on cuts. Is smooth when turning; changes directions well. Gets good breaks. Tracks down the ball well when it's in the air. Shows outstanding hands. Is limited by height and speed; may struggle to match up one-on-one vs. bigger and/or faster NFL receivers. Press technique needs work. **Grade: 8.1**

Run/pass recognition: Has excellent awareness and instincts. Gets a great jump on balls in front of him. Can read quarterbacks' eyes. Shows a good feel for receivers breaking off their routes. Doesn't get caught peeking. **Grade: 8.1**

Closing speed: This is an area of concern. Is quick and smooth when turning but lacks top-end speed. Doesn't show a second gear when tracking down deep balls. Won't make up for mistakes with catch-up speed in the NFL. **Grade: 7.0**

Ball skills: Adequate leaping ability helps compensate for a lack of great size. Is aggressive; challenges for the ball in the air. Times his jumps well. Shows great hands. Is a big-time playmaker. Is an experienced return specialist. **Grade: 8.1**

Run support: Is average in this area. Lacks great strength but is willing to come up.

SPOTLIGHT

Terence Newman
Kansas State

The team that drafts Terence Newman on April 26 should send a thank-you note to Joe Williams.

In his first two years at Salina (Kan.) Central High, Newman made his mark in basketball, a sport he was passionate about, and track but didn't play football. Then, Williams came up with a challenge to his friend: "If I go out for football, you go out for football."

Newman laughs now and says, "I was just like, 'Sure, Joe, why not?' "

Despite the late start, Newman is considered the best cornerback—and perhaps athlete—in the 2003 draft. He won the Jim Thorpe Award as the nation's top defensive back last season and also returned three kicks (two punts) for touchdowns. In his college track career, Newman was a two-time Big 12 outdoor 100-meter champion.

Track, Newman says, has greatly aided his football abilities. "You do drills all the time in track," Newman says, "and they helped me with my speed, my steps (footwork), my focus. In track, they teach you that you should have no wasted movements. It's the same in football. Wasted movements take away your speed advantage."

Shutdown corners are precious commodities in the NFL, and when asked if Newman can be one, an NFL college scouting director says forcefully and without hesitation, "Yes. Yes, I do." Then, the scout elaborates: "His speed is outstanding; it's really hard beating him deep. His ball skills are excellent, and he should be effective in press and off (zone) coverage."

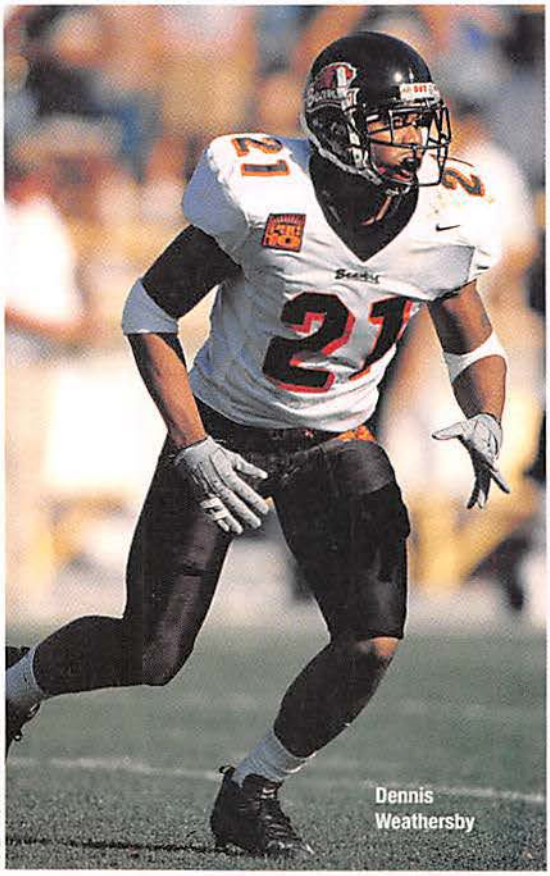
If there's a question about Newman, it's his size (5-10½, 181). "I'm not built like a linebacker or a safety," Newman says. "but I use my brains out there, like by going low on tackles." Though Newman names Deion Sanders as his cornerback idol, he's the anti-Deion in this regard: "I've never been scared to take on anybody running the ball."

Newman's size wasn't an issue in two shining moments last season. He held standout wide receivers Roy Williams of Texas and Justin Gage of Missouri, both of whom are bigger receivers, to five combined receptions for 75 yards.

"Texas threw away from me," Newman says, "but Missouri threw my way all day. Gage had two catches: one for no yards, one for 57, which came off a flea-flicker."

It's production like that has Newman in demand. Even if it's not in basketball.

"I've dreamed of getting drafted for a long time," he says. "Even if it's not the NBA, it's all good." —*Kyle Veltrop*



DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

Dennis Weathersby

Doesn't show much power or explosiveness when tackling but wraps up well. **Grade: 7.3**
Bottom line: Wilson is an accomplished, confident playmaker, but he may never be more than a No. 2 NFL corner because he lacks size and speed. His best fit might be as a nickel back covering the slot receiver.
FINAL GRADE: 7.7

5. Rashean Mathis, Bethune-Cookman

6-0½ 190 4.44 2nd round
NFL comparison: Jason Sehorn, Giants
Coverage skills: Has good size and great speed. Is a fluid athlete; has smooth hips for his height. Shows good instincts, closing speed and ball skills. Is very raw. Technique is subpar. Needs to show better footwork. Level of college competition is a concern; didn't match up vs. elite receivers in Division I-AA. Lacks great initial quickness and burst out of his backpedal. Lacks some suddenness when turning. **Grade: 7.3**
Run/pass recognition: Shows good natural awareness and instincts. Is an experienced playmaker. Works well in open field. Can read quarterbacks' eyes. Gets a good jump on the ball. Is inexperienced at corner; needs time to develop in this area. **Grade: 7.2**
Closing speed: Has great speed. Closes quickly when the ball is in the air. Shows a second gear when turning and running. **Grade: 7.9**
Ball skills: Is a terrific leaper; times his jumps well. Shows outstanding hands when the ball is in the air. Is aggressive and physical when challenging for the ball in traffic. **Grade: 8.0**
Run support: Is an adequate tackler; wraps up and drags down. Has good size but lacks explosive power. Is not as aggressive or physical as he should be in this area, especially considering he was a former safety. **Grade: 7.2**
Bottom line: Mathis, a versatile developmental prospect, shined as a cornerback, safety and as a punt returner at the small-school level. He has good physical skills, but because he is so unpolished, it's unclear whether he can play corner in the NFL.
FINAL GRADE: 7.5

6. Dennis Weathersby, Oregon State

6-0⅝ 211 4.31 2nd round
NFL comparison: Eric Warfield, Chiefs
Coverage skills: Has great size. Is fluid and has adequate speed. Is strong; excels at muscling receivers out of their routes. Is most comfortable in press coverage. Shows flashes of becoming a physical shutdown man-to-man cover corner but is inconsistent. Makes too many mental mistakes. Gets caught out of position at times and lacks the speed to compensate. **Grade: 7.5**
Run/pass recognition: Is poor in this area. Miscalculates, resulting in too many gambles. Is much better in zone coverage than in man-to-man. Is much when better pressing receivers than when playing off them. **Grade: 6.7**
Closing speed: Has adequate playing speed but lacks great catch-up speed to make up for mistakes. Will struggle to turn and run with speedy NFL receivers if not in position. **Grade: 7.0**
Ball skills: Is aggressive. Excels at jumping underneath routes. Shows good leaping ability. Challenges for the ball in the air. Times his jumps well. Shows soft, reliable hands. **Grade: 7.6**
Run support: Is physical and has good size, but it doesn't show up in this area. Doesn't always give high effort. **Grade: 6.8**
Bottom line: Weathersby, a durable four-year starter who played both sides of the field at Oregon State, was somewhat of an underachiever. He has the physical skills of a second-round cornerback, but he could fall on the board because of his history of inconsistency. **FINAL GRADE: 7.1**

7. Sammy Davis, Texas A&M

5-11⅛ 183 4.37 3rd round
NFL comparison: Denard Walker, Broncos
Strengths: Has adequate size. Is aggressive and strong. Shows great instincts. Is more quick than fast. Changes directions well. Doesn't lose anything in transition. Shows fluid hips. Is explosive out of cuts. Shows excellent recognition skills. Rarely takes a false step. Jumps on underneath routes well. Plays under control. Takes good angles to the ball. Closes well in the short area. Shows great hands and ball skills. Is physical and willing in run support despite being overmatched at times. Is a solid open-field tackler.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal speed and size for an outside cornerback. Lacks great closing speed on the deep ball. Will have trouble turning and running with bigger, faster NFL receivers. Isn't great in bump-and-run or press coverage because he lacks bulk.
Bottom line: Davis' potential is limited because he lacks the size and speed to match up one-on-one outside in the NFL, but he is a good, late first-day value. Experienced, consistent, confident and athletic, Davis will develop into a good short-area cover corner, as a No. 2 starter or a nickel back. **FINAL GRADE: 6.9**

8. Drayton Florence, Tuskegee

5-11⅝ 194 4.45 3rd round
NFL comparison: Ken Lucas, Seahawks
Strengths: Has terrific physical skills: size, strength and speed. Can be overpowering in press coverage. Excels at knocking receivers out of their routes. Is fluid for his size. Can turn and run. Shows great catch-up speed and leaping ability.
Weaknesses: Lacks a great work ethic. Technique is sloppy. Comes out of his backpedal too high at times. Doesn't show a great feel for reading quarterbacks in zone coverage. Footwork gets him in trouble at times. Is a marginal open-field tackler. Is physical in coverage but not against the run.
Bottom line: Florence spent his college career at cornerback, but he could move to safety in the NFL. There are concerns about his inconsistent effort, sloppy technique and struggles to hold up one-on-one against better competition at the Senior Bowl. Florence has the physical skills to develop into a starting corner, but he needs to improve his coverage and tackling skills. **FINAL GRADE: 6.5**

9. Shane Walton, Notre Dame

5-9⅞ 187 4.60 3rd round
NFL comparison: Ronde Barber, Buccaneers
Strengths: Is aggressive. Is most comfortable in bump-and-run or zone. Shows good instincts. Doesn't take many false steps. Gets physical with receivers and excels at taking them out of their routes in press coverage. Has quick feet; moves well laterally. Shows excellent hands and ball skills. Goes after the ball in the air. Attacks the run from the perimeter. Is an excellent open-field tackler.
Weaknesses: Lacks elite size. Has marginal top-end speed. Has some trouble when play-

SPOTLIGHT Andre Woolfolk, Oklahoma

Andre Woolfolk realized there was one way to make it big in the NFL: concentrate on becoming a cornerback.

Woolfolk started his college career as a wide receiver, his only position as a freshman. Then, in his sophomore and junior years, he split time between receiver and cornerback. Woolfolk completed the transformation by playing only on defense as a senior.

Woolfolk's versatility had the potential of being his curse. By playing two positions, he might not have become proficient enough at one.

It's hard to blame the Oklahoma coaches for wanting to use Woolfolk both ways. He runs the 40 in 4.4 seconds. He has an NBA-level vertical leap. And he has a knack for big plays, such as his interception and block of a field-goal attempt in Oklahoma's Rose Bowl win over Washington State.

In 2002, the Oklahoma coaching staff finally resisted the urge to exploit Woolfolk's versatility. Mike Stoops, the Sooners' co-defensive coordinator and secondary coach, pushed Woolfolk to concentrate on cornerback. Stoops was swayed by Woolfolk's performance in the 2001 Red River rivalry, when he blocked a Texas field-goal attempt and intercepted a Chris Simms pass in the Sooners' 14-3 win.

JOHN FRELICH FOR TSN

Stoops says Woolfolk didn't embrace the idea initially. But last spring, he recognized the best way to help the Sooners—and his draft value—was playing one position: cornerback.

Stoops says Woolfolk still has to smooth out areas of his game, such as his footwork at the line of scrimmage and ability to recognize routes. But while Woolfolk remains a work in progress, his size (6-1, 193) and athletic ability make him an intriguing prospect for the NFL.

"I think he's got to learn a few things," says an AFC college scout. "But he's got the two main ingredients: He's got size and he can run."

And now that Woolfolk has a clear idea of what position he will play in the NFL, he can work on fine-tuning his skills for that job. Stoops has no doubts that Woolfolk has found his best spot.

"Cornerback is his most natural position," Stoops says. "He'll never go back to receiver." —*George Winkler*

ing off in man coverage. Isn't ideally fluid in one-on-one coverage. Has trouble turning and running. Lacks good catch-up speed.
Bottom line: Walton, initially a walk-on from Notre Dame's soccer team, emerged as one of the nation's top playmakers as a senior. He plays bigger than his size and with much aggressiveness, but he lacks ideal speed and athleticism. **FINAL GRADE: 6.3**

10. Roderick Babers, Texas

5-8½ 185 4.40 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Ray Buchanan, Falcons
Strengths: Has good quickness and adequate speed. Is fluid when turning. Changes directions well. Is most comfortable when covering the short area. Excels at bursting out of his backpedal and making plays on underneath routes. Leaves a cushion; closes well on plays in front of him. Is technically sound. Shows good footwork. Doesn't take many false steps.
Weaknesses: Lack of height is a big concern. Has trouble matching up on the outside and downfield. Loses too many jump balls to taller receivers. Isn't physical enough. Gets pushed around near the line. Struggles to challenge for the ball in the air. Shows marginal ball skills. Loses the ball in the air at times. Is undersized vs. the run. Needs to improve open-field tackling.
Bottom line: Babers is an efficient, experienced and durable cover corner—he held his own playing opposite 2002 first-round pick Quentin Jammer as a junior. But Babers lacks great size and catch-up speed, so his NFL potential is limited. He also is a subpar tackler and isn't much of a factor in run support. **FINAL GRADE: 6.1**

11. Kevin Garrett, SMU

5-9 190 4.37 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Aaron Glenn, Texans
Strengths: Has great speed and good athleticism. Shows smooth hips. Changes directions well. Doesn't lose much in transition. Shows burst in and out of breaks. Is most comfortable when coming forward. Excels at anticipating and jumping underneath routes. Shows good hands and excellent ball skills. Has good leaping ability, which helps compensate for his lack of size against vertical routes.
Weaknesses: Is short. Has trouble matching up outside against taller receivers. Struggles against bigger, stronger receivers. Has trouble making plays in traffic. Is raw. Got away with marginal footwork and technique in college. Is a willing run defender but doesn't make much of an impact. Durability is a concern; missed three games because of injury as a senior.
Bottom line: Garrett, a cousin of the Chargers' Quentin Jammer, thrived against lower-level Division I competition. Garrett might need a full year of coaching and technique work before he can contribute in any capacity in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 5.8**

12. Ricky Manning, UCLA

5-8⅝ 180 4.43 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Jason Webster, 49ers
Strengths: Is speedy and quick. Shows fluid hips and explosive burst out of cuts. Excels at changing directions. Stays balanced and under control. Can stay with double moves without losing much in transition. Shows solid recognition skills and instincts. Has great deep speed. Can catch up if he makes a mistake. Shows good hands. Makes many plays on balls in the air. Also is an experienced and reliable punt returner.
Weaknesses: Lack of size limits potential. Has trouble matching up on outside vs. bigger receivers. Isn't very physical; struggles to make plays in traffic. Is overmatched against the run. Gets run over at times.
Bottom line: Manning, also a minor league baseball prospect, is one of the fastest and most athletic cornerbacks in this class. His lack of size and strength might limit him to covering slot receivers in the NFL.
FINAL GRADE: 5.7

13. Torrie Cox, Pittsburgh

5-9¾ 175 4.55 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Jerry Azumah, Bears
Strengths: Is more quick than fast. Shows adequate short-area coverage skills. Has good suddenness and burst out of his backpedal. Is smooth when turning. Changes directions well. Is instinctive. Has significantly improved recognition skills since making position move from running back two years ago. Is a solid kickoff returner and has good hands, quickness, toughness and elusiveness. Works hard and is a terrific leader.
Weaknesses: Is somewhat inexperienced at the position. Lack of size and speed limit NFL potential. Lacks the speed to turn and run with some of the faster NFL receivers. Doesn't show great leaping skills. Lacks bulk and strength. Has trouble getting in a shove at the line in press coverage. Gets

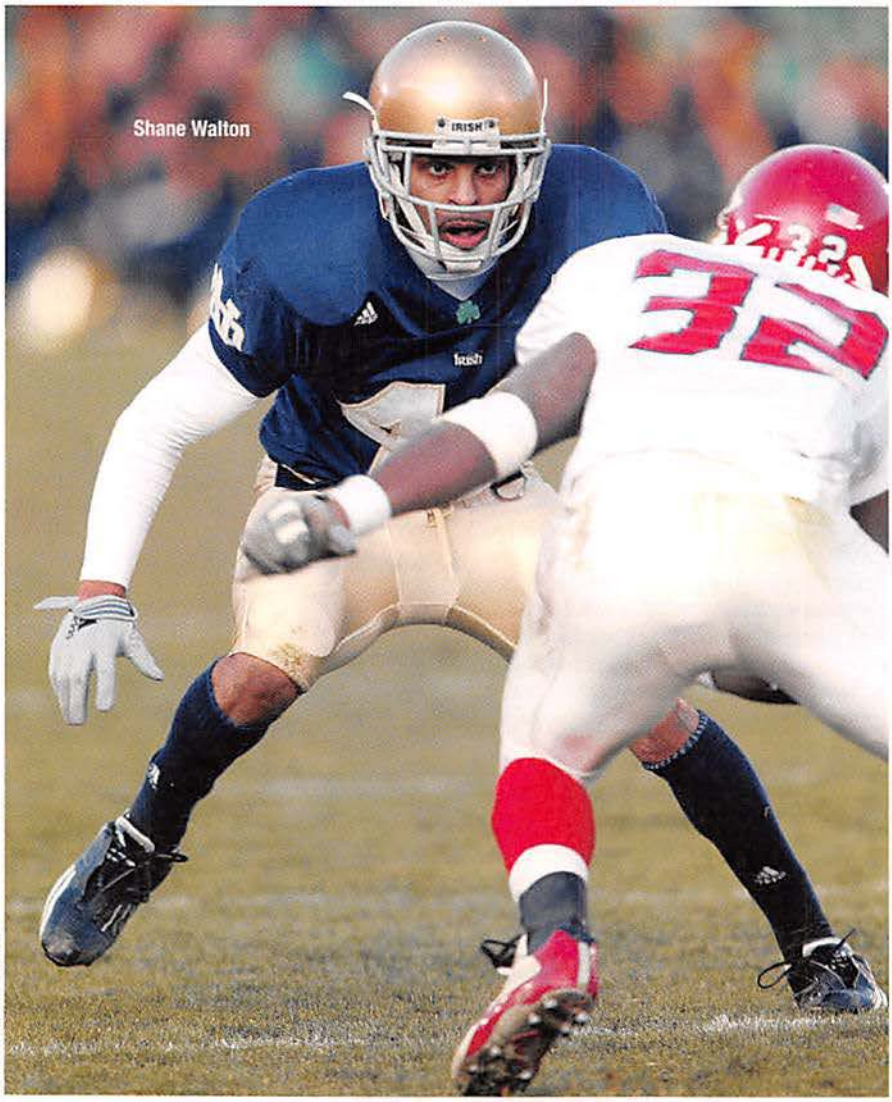
overwhelmed vs. the run at times.
Bottom line: Cox is an intriguing second-day prospect because his short-area coverage skills are good enough for him to develop into a No. 2 starting cornerback. He also has the potential to contribute as a kickoff returner. **FINAL GRADE: 5.6**

14. Donald Strickland, Colorado

5-10 177 4.46 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Duane Starks, Cardinals
Strengths: Is more quick than fast. Is better moving forward than when turning and running. Is physical and aggressive. Leads with shoulders. Can be a punishing tackler for his size. Holds up in run support. Shows good short-area quickness. Has good burst out of his backpedal. Is most comfortable in the short area. Cuts off underneath routes well. Has a nose for the ball, both on passing plays and running plays. Shows some big-play flair.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal size and speed. Has some trouble matching up vs. vertical outside receivers. Is better laterally than when forced to turn and run. Lacks deep catch-up speed. Doesn't always find the ball over his shoulder. Gets lost downfield at times. Suffered three mild concussions during the 2000 season and had shoulder surgery before the 2001 season.
Bottom line: Strickland is undersized and there are concerns about his durability, but he stayed healthy as a senior and became an all-around playmaker. His lack of great size, strength and speed will prevent him from being drafted on Day 1, but he might be a fourth-round steal because of his potential to develop into a solid NFL nickel back.
FINAL GRADE: 5.4

15. DeJuan Groce, Nebraska

5-9⅛ 189 4.55 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Deltha O'Neal, Broncos
Strengths: Is more quick than fast. Shows good short-area coverage skills. Shows good quickness and burst out of cuts. Excels at changing directions. Is most comfortable coming forward. Shows explosiveness out of his backpedal. Breaks on and cuts off underneath routes well. Works best when in the short zone and when playing off in coverage. Shows great ball skills. Excels at jumping routes. Shows good hands when the ball is in the air. Has great instincts; doesn't take many false steps. Is an explosive punt returner and has big-play potential.
Weaknesses: Lack of height and pure speed limits potential. Doesn't match up well on the outside. Has trouble with bigger, more physical receivers. Loses too many jump balls. Doesn't show catch-up speed to make up for mistakes. Gets beaten by vertical outside receivers too often. Must be protected in deep zones.
Bottom line: Groce projects as a slot nickel back. As long as he is protected deep, he is an effective underneath cover corner. He is one of the elite punt return specialists in this class and has the potential to become a game breaker. **FINAL GRADE: 5.2**


Shane Walton

ROSS DETTMAN FOR TSN

16. Charles Tillman, Louisiana-Lafayette

6-1 189 4.43 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Doug Evans, Seahawks
Strengths: Has a great combination of size and speed. Is aggressive. Likes to press near the line and is most comfortable in physical matchups. Has good instincts and gets a solid break on the ball. Shows the speed to turn and run and the leaping ability to challenge for the ball in the air. Finds the ball over his shoulder. Is a solid, powerful tackler. Excels at open-field tackling. Is willing and effective in run support.
Weaknesses: Doesn't match up well vs. top speed receivers. Lacks great experience at corner. Played free safety in the second half of his senior season but lacks ideal size and power to play that position in the NFL. Has some trouble against smaller, quicker receivers. Is a bit long-legged. Struggles a bit to change directions without losing speed in transition. Is vulnerable to quick-hitting passes and double moves.
Bottom line: Tillman, a four-year Division I-AA starter, had shoulder surgery prior to his junior season but bounced back strong as a corner in 2001 and as a corner and free safety in 2002. His impressive combination of size and top-end speed gives him good upside. Tillman has yet to play against top competition, but he has the physical skills to develop into a playmaker. **FINAL GRADE: 5.0**

17. Jason Goss, TCU

5-9¾ 186 4.63 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Ray Mickens, Jets
Strengths: Shows great instincts and recognition skills. Is a fluid athlete. Shows good burst out of his backpedal. Is smooth when turning. Has a good feel for zone coverage. Is confident and aggressive in man coverage. Gets a good jump on balls in front of him. Finds the ball in the air. Has a strong upper

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body. Shows great ball skills.
Weaknesses: Durability is a concern; had a major knee injury in 2000. Lacks great size and speed. May never hold up one-on-one on the outside in the NFL. Doesn't show catch-up speed to make up for mistakes. Isn't very physical in coverage. Is an inconsistent open-field tackler. Is subpar in run support. Is undersized.
Bottom line: Goss plays much bigger than his size and runs much faster than his 40 time. He was his usual aggressive, explosive self as a senior after fully recovering from knee surgery. He also has some upside as a punt returner. **FINAL GRADE: 4.9**

18. Bryan Scott, Penn State

6-0¼ 214 4.60 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Gary Baxter, Ravens
Strengths: Is big and strong. Excels in run support. Is physical and aggressive and attacks the run. Shows great recognition skills. Uses hands to get through traffic. Is a strong tackler; breaks down and wraps up in the open field. Is also physical in coverage. Excels at getting his hands on receivers. Presses receivers and consistently takes them out of their routes with his size and strength.
Weaknesses: Is long-legged. Struggles to match up vs. quicker/faster receivers. Has trouble turning and running. Struggles to change directions. Is a target for receivers with quick feet who use double moves well. Struggles when he doesn't get in a good shove at the line. Doesn't have the speed or quickness to hold up one-on-one in the NFL.
Bottom line: Scott started at cornerback at Penn State, but he may need to move to safety to stick in the NFL because his biggest strength lies in run support. **FINAL GRADE: 4.7**

19. Chris Brown, UAB

5-11⅞ 190 4.55 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Anthony Henry, Browns
Strengths: Has good height and is strong. Shows good range in zone coverage. Shows good instincts and recognition skills. Protects himself from getting beat downfield. Doesn't take many false steps. Jumps short routes well. Is most comfortable when coming forward. Has good bulk and strength for press coverage. Can take receivers out of their routes. Is adequate in run support.
Weaknesses: Has some trouble in man-to-man coverage against speed receivers. Is a bit long-legged. Has trouble turning and running. Doesn't show great tackling strength at the point of attack. May lack the size and strength to move to safety. Is poor at shedding blocks. Gets caught up in traffic vs. the run. Had surgery on both shoulders and one leg after the 1999 season.
Bottom line: Brown was a durable and versatile four-year starter at UAB, mostly at corner. He played safety at the Senior Bowl, but cornerback is the better position for him. He has some upside, but his lack of ideal speed, smooth hips and sound ball skills limits him. **FINAL GRADE: 4.6**

20. Ivan Taylor, Louisiana-Lafayette

6-0⅜ 187 4.42 **5th round**
NFL comparison: David Barrett, Cardinals
Strengths: Has great size and speed. Is a versatile athlete; played on both sides of the ball in college. Shows good quickness and fluid hips. Is tough and has good upper-body strength. Excels at taking receivers out of their patterns in press coverage. Shows good leaping ability and hands. Is strong and physical in run support.
Weaknesses: Is raw, with only one year of experience at cornerback. Has some trouble turning and running. Struggles to find the ball in the air when turned around. Recognition skills and technique both need much work.
Bottom line: Taylor, a converted running back, showed flashes at cornerback as a senior. He is unpolished, but he has great size, fluid athleticism and terrific top-end speed for a late-round developmental prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 4.4**

21. Asante Samuel, Central Florida

5-10¾ 177 4.63 **5th round**
NFL comparison: Willie Williams, Seahawks
Strengths: Is more quick than fast. Is physical for his size. Has good burst in and out of breaks. Shows great short-area quickness. Hips are fluid. Can change directions with quicker receivers. Is aggressive and strong. Shows solid ball skills. Excels at jumping short routes. Is most comfortable when coming forward. Is a sound open-field tackler.
Weaknesses: Lack of ideal size and speed limits potential. Lacks the catch-up speed to make mistakes against faster receivers. Has trouble with bigger, stronger receivers. Lacks great height and leaping ability; is a target on fade routes.
Bottom line: Samuel, an accomplished three-year starter at cornerback, also returned punts at Central Florida. His size and speed are marginal, but his short-area coverage skills make him a good nickel back prospect. **FINAL GRADE: 4.2**

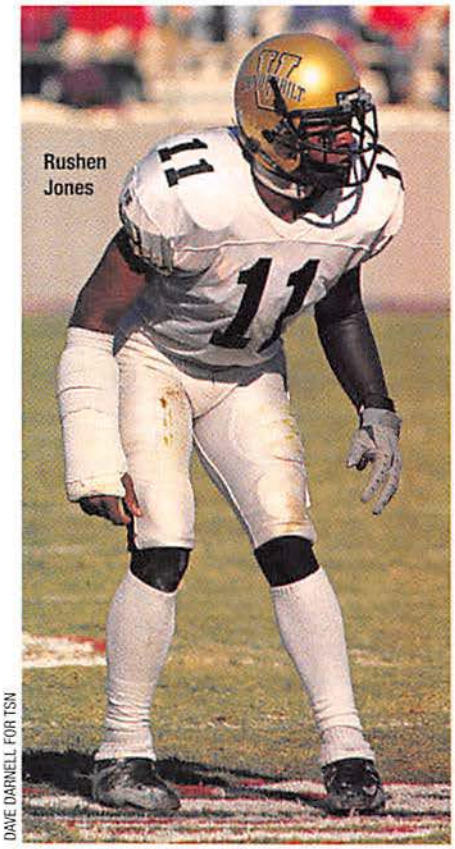
22. Cedric Henry, Michigan State

5-9½ 182 4.55 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Tay Cody, Chargers
Strengths: Is more quick than fast. Shows good burst out of his backpedal and short-area quickness. Is smooth when turning. Excels at changing directions. Shows excellent hands and great ball skills. Is physical and aggressive in coverage. Is confident when matching up one-on-one. Likes to jam receivers at the line. Excels at playing the ball in the air. Is aggressive in run support.
Weaknesses: Lacks great straight-line speed. Gives up some big plays when overaggressive. Lacks the catch-up speed to recover from mistakes. Has marginal height and subpar leaping ability. Will struggle to match up outside in the NFL. Is inconsistent. Guesses too much and gets caught out of position. Takes unnecessary chances. Loses focus and gives up plays underneath. Misses too many open-field tackles vs. the run. Was academically ineligible in 2001.
Bottom line: Henry is an intriguing prospect because of his fluid hips, aggressive style, playmaking skills and short-area, man-to-man coverage skills, but he is limited by his lack of height and top-end speed. He is a risk to draft any earlier than the fifth round because he gets beat deep too often. **FINAL GRADE: 3.9**

Donald Strickland
TOM HAUCK FOR TSN

23. Brian Mance, Clemson

5-10 185 4.62 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Robert Tate
Strengths: Is a playmaker. Has adequate size and good straight-line speed. Is most comfortable when coming forward. Closes well


Rushen Jones

DAVE DARNELL FOR TSN

on the ball in the air. Has big, soft hands and excellent ball skills. Challenges for jump balls. Works best in press zone coverage. Comes off the edge and is physical in run support. Has some upside as a punt returner.
Weaknesses: Is somewhat stiff when turning. Has some trouble vs. double moves. Doesn't adequately change directions in man coverage. Loses ball in the air when he must turn and run. Shows inconsistent recognition skills. Gambles and often gets overextended. Misses too many open-field tackles.
Bottom line: Mance makes many big plays, but he also gives them up. He was more consistent as a senior, but he lacks great man coverage skills. Mance's special teams potential increases his value, but he is nothing more than a late-round prospect.
FINAL GRADE: 3.7

24. Rushen Jones, Vanderbilt

5-10¾ 201 4.55 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Dwight Smith, Buccaneers
Strengths: Has great experience. Has good size. Is more quick than fast. Is strong; excels at pressing receivers at the line. Is physical in coverage; would fit best in a cover 2 scheme. Shows great instincts and is intelligent. Learns receivers' tendencies. Doesn't take many false steps. Shows adequate burst out of his backpedal. Is most comfortable when coming forward. Excels at open-field tackling. Is solid in run support.
Weaknesses: Lacks great speed and has some trouble when forced to turn and run with faster receivers. Is a bit long-legged and stiff in the hips. Doesn't show great catch-up speed. Has average ball skills. Isn't a big playmaker.
Bottom line: Jones is a savvy, confident player and has good leadership skills. He lacks great speed and is somewhat of a liability in deep coverage, but he makes few mental mistakes and would be a great late-round value for an NFL team that plays a zone coverage scheme.
FINAL GRADE: 3.4

25. Korey Banks, Mississippi State

5-9½ 178 4.65 **6th round**
NFL comparison: Artrell Hawkins, Bengals
Strengths: Is quick and has good speed. Shows good burst in and out of his backpedal. Is most comfortable when coming forward. Shows great initial quickness. Jumps underneath routes well. Hips are smooth; changes directions without losing much in transition. Can cover double moves. Works best in the short area, where he can take chances. Shows solid hands and ball skills. Is surprisingly aggressive in run support. Is a sound, wrap-up, open-field tackler.
Weaknesses: Is short. Size limits potential. Lacks the toughness in coverage to play outside in the NFL. Lacks great leaping ability. Gets overmatched by taller, more physical receivers. Recognition skills are marginal. Makes too many mental mistakes. Gives up too many big plays. Gambles too often. Struggles to catch up vs. faster, taller receivers downfield.
Bottom line: Banks is a late-round prospect as a slot cover corner who easily could find himself out of the league after only one season if he doesn't improve his recognition skills and learn how to protect himself better.
FINAL GRADE: 3.1

26. Lynaris Elpheage, Tulane*

5-9 170 4.49 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Darrien Gordon
Strengths: Is quick and smooth in coverage and has good short-area skills. Shows good burst and quickness out of his backpedal. Excels at changing directions. Gets a good break on passes in front of him. Shows outstanding instincts and recognition skills. Excels at reading keys and reacting; is most comfortable when playing off his man or in zone coverage. Is a big playmaker. Shows great initial quickness. Closes well. Shows solid hands. Challenges for the ball in the air. Has much upside as a return specialist.
Weaknesses: Is undersized. Must give big receivers extra cushion. Struggles to keep up man-to-man with speed receivers. Has trouble against strong and physical receivers. Is shielded from the ball by tall receivers. Doesn't do much in run support.
Bottom line: Elpheage was durable and versatile at Tulane. He scored four touchdowns as a senior—off a punt, a kickoff, an interception and one rushing. There are concerns about his size and experience against top competition, but he could develop into a decent slot cover corner and punt returner.
FINAL GRADE: 2.8

27. B.J. Tucker, Wisconsin

5-10 180 4.37 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Jamar Fletcher, Dolphins
Strengths: Has great straight-line speed. Improved recognition skills and became more aggressive as a senior. Closes well on the ball. Shows good hands and ball skills. Is a fluid athlete. Can mirror receivers. Doesn't lose much in transition.
Weaknesses: Is raw. Needs to improve feet and technique in coverage. Lacks size; struggles to challenge for the ball against taller receivers. Doesn't always play up to timed speed because of tendency to hesitate. Isn't ideally physical in coverage; needs to improve press skills. Is marginal in run support.
Bottom line: Tucker is a track star first and a football player second, but he showed enough improvement in 2002 (five interceptions) to warrant late-round consideration.
FINAL GRADE: 2.4

28. Terrell Roberts, Oregon State

5-9¼ 201 4.60 **7th round**
NFL comparison: Nick Harper, Colts
Strengths: A short, stocky former safety who improved coverage skills as a senior. Is physical in coverage. Gets into receivers' bodies in press coverage. Is a fluid athlete. Shows good burst in and out of breaks. Is most comfortable in the short area. Challenges for the ball in the air. Shows good hands and ball skills. Excels in run support.
Weaknesses: Lacks experience at cornerback. Footwork and recognition skills are inconsistent. Is short. Lacks top-end speed. Will struggle to match up one-on-one outside in the NFL.
Bottom line: Roberts has the potential to develop into a solid cover 2 corner because he plays the run so well. His marginal height and subpar speed limit him, however.
FINAL GRADE: 2.2

Others: 29. Jemeel Powell, California, 6-0¼, 186, 4.58 (40 time); **30.** Ronyell Whitaker, Virginia Tech, 5-8⅞, 195, 4.56; **31.** Terrence McGee, Northwestern State, 5-9⅜, 193, 4.55; **32.** Marvious Hester, Georgia Tech, 5-10¼, 172, 4.53; **33.** Mike Lehan, Minnesota, 5-11⅝, 184, 4.55; **34.** Rashad Faison, South Carolina, 5-8½, 190, 4.58; **35.** Gerald Dixon, Alabama, 5-9⅝, 185, 4.67; **36.** Willie Miles, Tennessee, 5-11½, 180, 4.58; **37.** Roderick Hood, Auburn, 5-10, 193, 4.67; **38.** Broderick Nelson, Michigan State, 5-11½, 170, 4.58; **39.** A.C. Carter, Indiana, 5-7⅜, 198, 4.58; **40.** Rhett Nelson, Colorado State, 6-0, 200, 4.57.

Safeties

Unlike the past two years—Adam Archuleta and Derrick Gibson in 2001 and Roy Williams and Ed Reed in 2002—this group doesn't have any blue-chippers. Mike Doss and Troy Polamalu stand out as the best two safeties, and both have a chance to be drafted late in the first round. Doss reminds us a lot of Williams because of his versatility, and Polamalu reminds us a lot of Archuleta because of his range and explosiveness in run support.

There is a noticeable drop-off in talent after Doss and Polamalu, but there is an abundance of talented third- and fourth-round prospects. Ken Hamlin is an explosive hitter but has character issues; Terrence Holt lacks speed but is a playmaker at safety and as a kick blocker; Julian Battle, who played cornerback as a senior, is loaded with athleticism but needs to improve his technique; Antwoine Sanders is lean but has great range as a center fielder; and Todd Johnson is versatile and steady but lacks any great physical qualities.

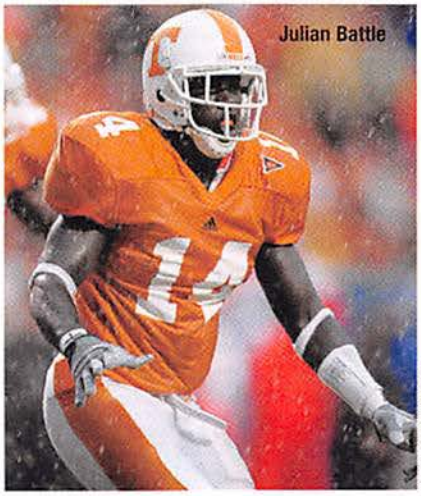
The Ohio State-Michigan rivalry is well represented with two Buckeyes (Doss and Donnie Nickey) and three Wolverines (Cato June, Charles Drake and Julius Curry) carrying draftable grades.

This group doesn't have great depth in the late rounds, but Nnamdi Asomugha, Willie Pile, Anthony Floyd and Thomas Wright are intriguing center fielder types who will be around on Day 2. There also are five undersized Day 2 safeties—Hanik Milligan, Terrence Kiel, Jerton Evans, Curry Burns and Quintin Mikell—who excelled at stopping the run in college and could make good special teams players in the NFL, but they all lack ideal size for strong safety.

***Denotes underclassman**

2002 DRAFT

Safeties taken	24
Round 1	2
Round 2	4
Round 3	4
Round 4	4
Round 5	5
Round 6	4
Round 7	1


Julian Battle

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

1. Mike Doss, Ohio State

5-9⅞ 200 4.45 (40 time) 1st round

NFL comparison: Roy Williams, Cowboys

Coverage skills: Is much more effective in zone than man-to-man. Is an above-average athlete and has good quickness and speed. Has above-average range because of instincts and speed. Gets to the sideline quickly. Is a presence in the middle of the field and is a playmaker. Shows marginal footwork and technique in man-to-man coverage. Lacks ideal height and must be protected from certain one-on-one matchups. **Grade: 7.7**

Run/pass recognition: Shows outstanding instincts against the run. Gets a great jump on the ball and covers a lot of ground because of quick reads and burst out of backpedal. Is football smart and prepares hard in the film room but still makes some mistakes and gives up big plays. **Grade: 7.8**

Closing speed: Shows great closing burst against the run. Shows decent catch-up speed in coverage. Lacks elite speed and can't afford to take false steps or gamble. **Grade: 8.2**

Ball skills: Is a playmaker. Knows when to go for the tackle and when to go for the interception. Shows excellent hands. Plays taller than listed height because of great leaping ability and timing. **Grade: 8.0**

Run support: Is a powerful, aggressive strong safety. Is a sideline-to-sideline defender. Lacks ideal size but can hold his own inside. Acts as an extra linebacker at times. Uses hands to sift through traffic. Takes great angles to ball. Has explosive short-area power. Can take on and shed blocks. Is a tough, powerful tackler in the open field. **Grade: 8.4**

Bottom line: Doss is the best all-around safety prospect. He clearly is better against the run. He will struggle in some man-to-man coverage situations, especially against NFL slot receivers, but he has outstanding instincts and good range in zone coverage. He doesn't have great size but is athletic, physical and aggressive. Doss isn't in the class of Roy Williams, the first safety drafted in 2002, but he has a similar makeup and should start right away. **FINAL GRADE: 8.0**

2. Troy Polamalu, USC

5-10¼ 213 4.50 2nd round

NFL comparison: Adam Archuleta, Rams

Coverage skills: Has top-end speed and is a fluid athlete. Is a physical presence in zone coverage. Has smooth change-of-direction skills. Shows poor man-to-man technique. Lacks ideal height. Will have trouble against tall NFL tight ends. Can be burned by play-action. Lacks great ball skills. **Grade: 7.5**

Run/pass recognition: Gets a great jump against the run. Can be overaggressive and take false steps. Has decent overall awareness and works hard in the film room. Is much better near the line. **Grade: 7.7**

Closing speed: Has great speed and is relentless in pursuit of the ball. Shows an extra gear when chasing from behind. Has terrific short-area burst and power when closing in for the big hit. Shows good closing quickness when blitzing and on special teams (blocked

JOB REQUIREMENTS

	Ht.	Wt.	40
NFL optimum	6-2	215	4.50
NFL minimum	5-10	190	4.65

Teams used to draft bigger, more physical strong safeties who could play the run and muscle receivers off their routes. The trend has shifted to more versatile players who still have the size to play in the box but has enough skills in pass coverage to counter offenses that use multiple-receiver sets and motion. The best free safeties have range and speed to cover a lot of ground and make plays on the ball when it's in the air.

ON THE RISE: Gerome Sapp, Notre Dame
Had 71 tackles and four interceptions as a full-time starter in 2002 after making six starts prior to the season.

ON THE DECLINE: Mike Doss, Ohio State
Gave up a couple of big plays last season and struggled with man coverage technique at East-West Shrine Game.

SLEEPER: Quintin Mikell, Boise State
Could thrive on special teams and possibly in a nickel role because of instincts, quickness and tackling skills.

UNREALIZED POTENTIAL: Julius Curry, Michigan
Was blossoming as a return specialist and a safety before suffering a shoulder injury during the 2001 season.

BIGGEST RISK: Ken Hamlin, Arkansas
He's a terrific athlete, but he plays out of control on the field and has had brushes with the law off it.

BEST IN MAN COVERAGE: Julian Battle, Tennessee
Moved to cornerback full-time during his senior season and honed his man-to-man coverage skills.

BEST IN ZONE COVERAGE: Anthony Floyd, Louisville
A classic center fielder with good instincts, speed and ball skills, he had 18 interceptions for the Cardinals.

TOUGHEST VS. RUN: Troy Polamalu, USC
He's basically a linebacker in a safety's body. In three seasons, he had 278 tackles (29 for loss) and six picks.

BEST QB ON DEFENSE: Todd Johnson, Florida
Is solid in every aspect. When he's in the game, it's like having an extra coach on the field.

MOST VERSATILE: Terrence Holt, N.C. State
A good all-around safety who might be worth drafting late on Day 1 because of his special teams skills.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

four punts in college). **Grade: 7.9**
Ball skills: Tends to go for the knockout hit rather than play the ball. Shows adequate hands but is not a great playmaker when the ball is in the air. **Grade: 7.7**
Run support: Is a well-built, aggressive, big-play strong safety. Has good strength against the run. Takes good angles to the ball and has outstanding instincts. Has excellent short-area burst and closing speed. Is a physical, punishing tackler in the open field. **Grade: 8.7**
Bottom line: Polamalu is short but has a great build and top-end speed, and he is a relentless run defender. He's at his best in the box and basically is an athletic linebacker. He does not have great experience in zone coverage and has limitations in man-to-man. But he is athletic and big and strong enough to match up against most NFL tight ends. He's the best pure strong safety in the class. **FINAL GRADE: 7.9**

3. Ken Hamlin, Arkansas*

6-1⅝ 203 4.55 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Rodney Harrison, Chargers
Strengths: Is a tough, powerful run stuffer and has good range and explosiveness. Has good size. Is a punishing hitter. Overruns some plays but is a terrific sideline-to-sideline run chaser. Is a big presence in middle of the field. Shows good timing on hits and makes receivers pay for coming into his zone. Is an above-average athlete and shows some man-to-man coverage skills. Should be able to match up against most NFL tight ends. Has adequate hands. Shows good closing quickness and instincts when the ball is thrown in front of him. Had nine interceptions in college.
Weaknesses: Character is a concern after off-the-field trouble. Doesn't have great speed and is too inconsistent in coverage. Needs to improve run/pass recognition skills and discipline. Is overzealous at times and takes a lot of false steps because of play-action. Lacks great change of direction skills in man-to-man coverage and struggles against slot receivers. Is at his best patrolling the middle in short zones. Plays run first, pass second—and gets into trouble. Can be undisciplined and too aggressive. Attacks the run without reading all the keys. Takes some poor pursuit angles and gets victimized by reverses and misdirection plays.
Bottom line: Hamlin doesn't have elite size but is well-built, aggressive, powerful and physical with good sideline-to-sideline skills against the run. He never stops hustling, always is around the ball. He set Arkansas records for tackles by a defensive back in each of his three seasons as a starter and finished his collegiate career as the school's all-time leading tackler (381). He has adequate speed and is a punishing tackler when in position, but he takes some poor angles and gets burned by play-action. He can be a big presence in the middle of the field in the passing game, but he must be protected from man-to-man situations. Character issues (two DUI convictions) could cause him to drop to the third or fourth round. **FINAL GRADE: 6.9**

4. Terrence Holt, N.C. State

6-2⅛ 202 4.65 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Darren Sharper, Packers
Strengths: Is athletic, aggressive, instinctive and versatile and has a knack for making big plays. Rarely takes a false step. Reads keys and reacts quickly. Is aggressive and physical against the run. Flies up in run support and is a tough, reliable tackler. Is better in zone than man-to-man. Reads quarterback's eyes and gets a good jump on the ball in zone. Has good hands and ball skills. Is physical and aggressive when the ball is in the air.
Weaknesses: Lacks ideal speed. Is somewhat long-legged and is not smooth when making cuts. Has trouble in coverage when forced to change directions or turn and run with a receiver. Lacks catch-up speed. Is at his best in short zones. Must be protected from certain one-on-one matchups and might have trouble covering the sideline downfield. Lacks ideal bulk to hold up consistently near the line if moved to strong safety.
Bottom line: Holt, the brother of Rams wide receiver Torry Holt, is a good all-around prospect and might be the No. 1 special teams player in the draft; he blocked eight field-goal attempts and four punts in college. He is a good all-around safety with the instincts and ball skills to make big plays. He works hard in the film room and doesn't make many mental mistakes. He is not an elite safety prospect because of size and speed limitations. **FINAL GRADE: 6.7**

Charles Drake
TODD WARSHAW FOR TSN

5. Julian Battle, Tennessee

6-2½ 206 4.50 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Antuan Edwards, Packers
Strengths: Is tall and strong and has good quickness and above-average speed. Is active against the run. Is aggressive and powerful. Is an adequate tackler in the open field. Makes plays sideline-to-sideline vs. the run. Has great coverage skills. Often lines up at cornerback and is adept in man-to-man. Is physical and likes to play bump-and-run. Is quick for a tall player. Shows good burst out of backpedal. Is aggressive when the ball is in the air. Has the quickness and change of direction skills to hold up against many NFL wide receivers and the speed to reach the sideline downfield.
Weaknesses: Has great coverage skills for a safety but is not fluid enough to play cornerback. Shows sloppy technique, and makes too many mental mistakes. Must improve his awareness in zone coverage. Takes too many false steps.
Bottom line: Battle played cornerback and safety at Tennessee but is a better fit at free safety. He doesn't have strong safety size, but he is a powerful hitter who is above average against the run. He lacks elite speed but has enough quickness and coverage skills to match up against most slot receivers. He isn't a top prospect because he lacks a great work ethic, has mental lapses on the field and has sloppy technique. He always has gotten by on natural skills, but he won't be able to do that in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 6.4**

6. Antwoine Sanders, Utah

6-1⅞ 201 4.51 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Kwamie Lassiter
Strengths: Has a good frame and adequate speed for a free safety. Is at his best in the deep zone. Shows good range and ball skills. Has good closing burst downfield. Reads keys well and consistently reaches the sideline in two-deep coverage. Is aggressive when the ball is in the air and has great leaping ability. Is adequate in run support. Has good instincts and takes solid angles to the ball. Shows quick burst out of backpedal. Attacks the line of scrimmage. Is a solid open-field tackler.
Weaknesses: Lacks great size and power in run support. Will have trouble matching up inside in the NFL. Doesn't always match up well in man coverage. Is a bit long-legged and lacks great change of direction skills. Struggles against quick wide receivers; loses too much momentum in transition when forced to turn and run with fast receivers.
Bottom line: Sanders is at his best in zone coverage and is a classic center fielder. He is aggressive against the run and takes good angles, but he doesn't have great size or power and struggles near the line. Placed in the right system, he could be a playmaking free safety. **FINAL GRADE: 6.2**

7. Todd Johnson, Florida

6-0 200 4.55 **3rd round**
NFL comparison: Sammy Knight
Strengths: Is a powerful strong safety. Has good leadership skills and football smarts. Makes the calls in the secondary. Is aggressive against the run. Shows good instincts and takes solid angles to the ball. Attacks the run and chases down plays sideline to sideline. Has adequate speed. Has good burst when coming forward and shows good run/pass recognition skills. Is at his best in short zones. Is physical in coverage and makes his presence felt in the middle of the field. Does not take many bad steps.
Weaknesses: Is much better against the run

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than in coverage. Lacks great size and might struggle to hold up near the line. Must show better technique as a tackler. Lacks great range in coverage and shows poor man-to-man skills.
Bottom line: Johnson is solid, durable and dependable. He basically is a coach on the field. He is aggressive against the run and has good short-area coverage skills. He doesn't make many mistakes. He has adequate size and speed but lacks great physical skills and lacks the speed and change of direction skills to hold up man-to-man against most NFL receivers. **FINAL GRADE: 6.1**

8. Gerome Sapp, Notre Dame

5-11⅞ 211 4.65 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Mike Green, Bears
Strengths: Is aggressive, physical and versatile. Has good initial quickness and fills the hole hard vs. the run. Attacks the line but remains under control. Is a sound, powerful tackler. Has good short-area power. Is a solid open-field tackler. Improved run/pass recognition skills and coverage skills as a senior. Is instinctive and takes good angles to the ball. Makes his presence felt in the passing game. Shows great hands and solid ball skills.
Weaknesses: Is an average athlete. Shows marginal man-to-man coverage skills. Lacks great suddenness or burst out of backpedal. Lacks top-end speed to reach the sideline downfield. Is strong and physical but lacks ideal size to match up near the line.
Bottom line: Sapp had a breakout season in 2002, his first year as a full-time starter. He has had trouble staying healthy and isn't the most physically gifted player. He's better in run support than in coverage, and his lack of speed is a concern. **FINAL GRADE: 5.9**

9. Nnamdi Asomugha, California

6-2 201 4.46 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Tebucky Jones, Patriots
Strengths: Has good size, speed and coverage skills for a free safety. Is an aggressive player with good power at point of attack. Is a willing hitter who charges hard in run support. Has good experience in man-to-man coverage after playing cornerback at Cal. Is surprisingly smooth for a tall defensive back. Is aggressive in coverage and jams receivers at the line. Attacks the ball in the air and has adequate ball skills.
Weaknesses: Must improve his play in the open field. Needs time to make transition to safety. Takes some poor angles against the run and misses too many open-field tackles. Lacks size to match up near the line and lacks range downfield because of marginal reaction skills. Must improve run/pass recognition skills.
Bottom line: Asomugha played safety and cornerback in college but likely will move back to safety in the NFL. He's an intriguing mid-round prospect because of his physical skills and ability in coverage. He lacks great instincts, but he has good speed in man-to-man coverage. He has good strength for a free safety and can be a powerful hitter. The concern is that he struggles in the open field. He will need time to develop better run/pass recognition skills and technique. **FINAL GRADE: 5.6**

10. Hanik Milligan, Houston

6-2½ 201 4.55 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Rogers Beckett, Chargers
Strengths: Is a ballhawk in the running game. Has an outstanding frame and good strength. Has adequate straight-line speed. Shows excellent instincts and reaction skills. Takes great angles to the ball and shows a good closing burst. Is a solid, punishing tackler who rarely misses a tackle in the open field. Has good ball skills and adequate speed in coverage. Has some big-play flair.
Weaknesses: Must add some bulk to play near the line. Shows raw coverage skills. Has marginal run/pass recognition skills. Takes too many false steps and gets caught peeking at the quarterback. Is overaggressive and gives up big plays. Is a bit long-legged and can look stiff when turning and running with receivers. Lacks the change of direction skills to cover quicker receivers.
Bottom line: Milligan is a durable athlete who must add some bulk, but he has a great frame and is a powerful, aggressive player. He is an attacking safety who fills the hole hard and is a big-time hitter. He lacks speed and shows some range when playing deep, but his coverage skills need a lot of work. He has potential as a special teams player.
FINAL GRADE: 5.3

11. Willie Pile, Virginia Tech

6-2 202 4.63 **4th round**
NFL comparison: Zack Bronson, 49ers
Strengths: Has good size and speed for a free safety and has good experience. Is aggressive vs. the run. Shows great run/pass recognition skills. Is a good tackler in the open field. Shows good instincts in coverage. Is at his best playing center field in zone coverage, reading the quarterback's eyes and attacking the ball. Has good height and leaping ability. Is aggressive when the ball is in the air and times his jumps well.
Weaknesses: Has had shoulder and neck problems. Must bulk up to play close to the line in the NFL. Lacks great man coverage skills. Is somewhat long-legged and stiff, and has some trouble against slot receivers. Has great straight-line speed but loses too much momentum when changing directions. Can be a liability against speedy receivers.
Bottom line: Pile lacks great size but is aggressive and tough in run support. He has great instincts and ball skills in zone coverage, but his man-to-man skills are marginal.
FINAL GRADE: 5.1

SPOTLIGHT

Mike Doss
Ohio State

DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

Mike Doss still remembers the hit. It was a de-cleater, an ooh-and-aah elicitor. Unfortunately, Doss' big hit took place against a teammate in practice. Knocked him out. But practice makes perfect.

The hits keep on coming for Doss. That's his forte. Always has been, all the way back to his senior year in high school at Canton (Ohio) McKinley, when he knocked out a Cleveland St. Ignatius player 1 yard from the end zone with a wicked wallop late in the state title game to preserve victory. From sandlot games to the Big Ten, Doss always has laid the lumber on opponents. But if you ran into him on campus in Columbus, Ohio, you'd think Doss was a teaching assistant. Assassin? This guy neither looks nor sounds like former Ohio State/Raiders great Jack Tatum.

But that's part of Doss' appeal. He is as smart as he is physical, which makes him a great leader. He displayed both traits at Ohio State as he set the tone for what some consider the nation's top defense during the Buckeyes' march to the national title. Doss finished his senior season with 107 tackles and was the Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year. He became the seventh Buckeye to earn first-team All-American honors three times.

Doss also showed maturity by returning for the 2002 season. He considered bolting for the NFL after 2001 but believed he had unfinished business—namely winning the national title. So, Doss pledged to his mother he would return for his senior season. Not just for the good of Ohio State, but because he had promised his mother he would graduate.

If Doss has a liability, it's his lack of size. The NFL ideal at his position is 6-2, 215, but Doss falls short at 5-9⅞, 200.

"There are some concerns about his height, but he's a big hitter," says Packers director of college scouting John Dorsey. "He plays with the type of intensity you like, and he has good savvy."

In addition to a lack of size, there are issues about Doss' speed. And that leads to doubts about his coverage ability. Strong safeties often are required to cover tight ends, who usually are about 6-5, 250 in the NFL. NFL teams will have to consider that disadvantage before to selecting Doss.

Still, anyone drafting Doss will be getting a high-quality person who also happens to be a good football player. —*Tom Dienhart*

SPOTLIGHT

Troy Polamalu, Southern California

The nerve of some people. "They're crazy. Yes, they are," Troy Polamalu says after learning certain folks have the audacity to compare him with another former USC defensive back, Ronnie Lott. Yes, that Ronnie Lott.

"We're talking about perhaps the greatest NFL defensive back," Polamalu says. "I guess it is flattering, but it's kind of a joke to me because I know that I don't compare to him."

Either Polamalu was responding *fa'a Samoan* (the Samoan way) with great respect for his elders, or he simply hasn't heard for himself the compliments, including those from USC coach Pete Carroll, a former NFL coach.

"I think he's capable of doing the stuff I've always used my top guy for (in the NFL)," Carroll says. "Troy's one of those guys you want to put in a position to make plays because he's physical and gets after it, plays and makes choices with great confidence, and really goes and jumps things the way you want to ... see a good instinctive safety do it."

Carroll, who had NFL stops with the Vikings, 49ers, Jets, Bills and Patriots, coached big-hitting safeties Joey Browner, Tim McDonald, Lawyer Milloy and ... Lott.

JOHN CORDES FOR TSN

Does Polamalu, 5-10¼ stack up with a legend such as Lott? Not if size is the measuring stick—Lott played at 6-1, 203—but even the elder USC alum with a reputation for toughness and passion sees some of those qualities in Polamalu.

"He's got the uncanny ability to understand *how* to play this game," Lott says. "Some people are just playing; he is playing and knowing what's going on while he's playing."

The most basic element to playing safety is a thirst for contact, approaching each play like a battering ram, ready to dislodge the ball from the offensive player or the offensive player from his feet. The great safeties, however, add a mental element to their game.

"What (Polamalu) lacks in the height that you like to see back there in a safety he makes up for in smarts and instincts," says an AFC college scouting director. "He's just got that great nose for the ball and great toughness."

A two-time All-American and three-year starter at USC, Polamalu has a knack for big plays. Given a choice between INTs or H-I-Ts, Polamalu responds, "The big hit ... Well, I guess maybe a big interception because that's better for the team.

"But if I could get an interception and a big hit in the same play, then I'd be in heaven."

—*Mike Kilduff*

12. Donnie Nickey, Ohio State

6-2⅛ 212 4.54 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Tony Parrish, 49ers

Strengths: Has impressive size and speed. Is tough, aggressive and physical. Attacks the run hard. Has good short-area power as a tackler. Takes good angles to the ball and is efficient in run support. Is adequate in zone coverage. Has good straight-line speed. Flashes decent ball skills. Has good height and leaping ability. Has the size to match up with any tight end and has good catch-up speed.

Weaknesses: Is a bit long-legged and has some trouble turning and running with quick wide receivers. Can be a liability vs. slot receivers. Is not quick out of his backpedal and takes too long to get to full speed. Is solid in run support but lacks explosive qualities and doesn't make many big plays.

Bottom line: Nickey was overshadowed by fellow safety Mike Doss at Ohio State, but Nickey was the leader of the defense. He practically was a coach on the field. He is not a big-play specialist but is an aggressive run stopper and is solid in zone coverage. He lacks explosiveness as a tackler and won't make many big plays vs. the run. He also lacks great man-to-man skills. He will make a versatile backup in the NFL and should be a fine special teams player. **FINAL GRADE: 4.8**

13. Cato June, Michigan

5-11⅞ 218 4.59 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Donovin Darius, Jaguars

Strengths: Has great size and adequate speed for a free safety. Has good run/pass recognition skills and instincts. Is better in zone coverage, where he can watch plays unfold. Has good size and strength vs. the run. Holds up well near the line and chases down plays in the running game. Is a solid tackler. Has good initial pop and power. Is a big hitter at times in coverage. Shows good burst out of his backpedal and is at his best when coming forward in zone coverage. Has adequate hands and ball skills.

Weaknesses: Has some trouble changing directions and turning and running against quick, fast receivers in man-to-man coverage. Gives up big plays because of stiff movement when changing directions. Lacks ideal man-to-man skills for a free safety. Is sort of a 'tweener—strong safety or free safety?

Bottom line: June missed the 2000 season after tearing his ACL, but he was a full-time starter his final two seasons. He has a good build for a safety, with good strength and speed. He is marginal in man coverage, but he has above-average range in zone and is strong and aggressive against the run. He is the type of versatile safety who is in vogue in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 4.6**

14. Anthony Floyd, Louisville

5-10 202 4.65 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Marcus Robertson, Seahawks

Strengths: Is a ballhawk. Shows good instincts and run/pass recognition skills. Has quick burst out of his backpedal. Does a great job of reading the quarterback's eyes. Doesn't take many false steps. Has adequate closing burst. Shows great hands and ball skills. Is aggressive and physical when the ball is in the air and has good leaping ability. Takes good angles to the ball. Does a nice job of tackling in the open field.

Weaknesses: Lacks ideal height and straight-line speed. Will have more trouble making plays along the sideline in the NFL. Is much better in zone coverage than in man. Lacks the change of direction skills and top-end speed to play effectively in man-to-man. Was terrific in run support in college but lacks ideal size and strength to hold up near line in the NFL.

Bottom line: Floyd was an playmaker in college. He is an aggressive, instinctive safety and has good toughness, run/pass recognition and ball skills. His upside is limited because of his marginal height and speed. He is not fluid in man-to-man coverage and will struggle more against the run in the NFL. He might never be more than a backup safety and special teams player. **FINAL GRADE: 4.5**

15. Thomas Wright, Michigan State

6-1½ 188 4.85 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Arturo Freeman, Dolphins

Strengths: Has good height and speed. Covers a lot of ground and takes good angles to the ball. Uses his hands to sift through traffic. Has good instincts and always is around the ball. Shows good recognition skills and range. Shows the speed to get to the sideline downfield. Shows closing burst when the ball is in the air.

Weaknesses: Has a lot of work to do in man-to-man coverage. Is a bit long-legged and is stiff in turns. Struggles against slot receivers. Is much better in zone than man-to-man. Is efficient in run support but lacks great size, power and aggressiveness. Is a drag-down tackler who lacks explosiveness. Must add bulk to hold up at point of attack in NFL.

Bottom line: Wright is more of a free safety prospect. He has adequate height and speed. He has good range and shows a nose for the ball in zone coverage and in run support. Wright improved each year, but he still lacks good man-to-man skills and is a poor tackler against the run. **FINAL GRADE: 4.2**

16. Charles Drake, Michigan

6-1 204 4.50 **5th round**

NFL comparison: Cory Hall

Strengths: Is much more involved against the run than the pass. Is aggressive and attacks the line. Sheds blocks well and takes solid angles to the ball. Has explosive quickness and is powerful. Makes a lot of plays in pursuit in the running game. Can be a physical presence over the middle of zones.

Weaknesses: Has a lot of room for improvement in coverage. Lacks experience at safety. Has poor man-to-man technique. Shows marginal run/pass recognition skills. Is a bit long-legged and has trouble turning and running with receivers. Gets in trouble against quick receivers who use double moves. Can be overaggressive and bite on play-action. Gives up too many big plays and will be a liability until recognition skills improve. Takes some poor angles against the run and is a poor open-field tackler.

Bottom line: Drake is a good athlete and has intriguing size and speed. He was a terrific special teams player in college and showed great improvement at safety in 2002. He spent a lot of time near the line in college and is strong and aggressive in run support. He has good speed and range in zone coverage. He lacks experience at safety, and his man-to-man technique is poor. **FINAL GRADE: 4.0**

17. Terrence Kiel, Texas A&M

5-10⅞ 203 4.46 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Robert Griffith, Browns

Strengths: Is an aggressive, hard-hitting strong safety. Shows good initial pop when tackling. Shows outstanding instincts vs. the run. Attacks the line of scrimmage. Is a powerful hitter. Takes good angles to the ball. Uses his hands to disengage and get through traffic. Is a solid open-field tackler. Is most comfortable in short-zone coverage; can be intimidating over the middle.

Weaknesses: Lacks great coverage skills. Has subpar speed. Looks a bit stiff when changing directions. Is a liability in most man-to-man situations. Is overaggressive at times and bites on play-action. Lacks ideal bulk to play near the line.

Bottom line: Kiel was a productive three-year college starter, especially against the run, but he lacks ideal size for strong safety and will have trouble inside the box in the NFL. He has the perfect skills to contribute on special teams while he works to improve his overall game. **FINAL GRADE: 3.9**

18. Jerton Evans, Virginia

5-10½ 195 4.58 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Omar Stoutmire, Giants

Strengths: Is an aggressive, in-the-box safety. Excels in run support. Shows good quickness and range. Chases plays all over the field. Can be a powerful tackler. Covers the short-area zone well. Is physical in coverage; makes his presence felt over the middle.

Weaknesses: Is undersized. Will struggle to take on blockers and match up at the point of attack. Is stiff in the hips and has marginal man-to-man coverage skills. Doesn't turn and run smoothly. Loses too much in transition. Lacks range to play the deep middle.

Bottom line: Evans was a productive, run-stopping strong safety in college, but his lack of size will keep him from matching up near the line vs. the run in the NFL. He also lacks the coverage skills to develop into anything more than a reserve and sub-package player. **FINAL GRADE: 3.6**

Terrence Holt

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

19. Curry Burns, Louisville

6-0⅝ 213 4.65 **6th round**

NFL comparison: Sam Shade

Strengths: Is a big hitter. Has a good combination of size and instincts. Shows adequate range and great instincts vs. the run. Uses his hands to sift through traffic. Takes good angles to the ball. Shows excellent short-area quickness and power. Is an explosive tackler and open-field playmaker. Is a big middle-of-the-field presence in coverage. Can make a play on the ball in the air.

Weaknesses: Shows subpar coverage skills. Lacks great change of direction skills. Has trouble matching up against quick receivers. Has marginal speed and range in zones. Can't cover slot receivers and won't play much two-deep zone in the NFL.

Bottom line: Burns was an aggressive and prolific-tackling strong safety in college, but he lacks speed and range in coverage. He could be a good special teams player and possibly a nickel linebacker. **FINAL GRADE: 3.2**

20. Quintin Mikell, Boise State

5-9¾ 200 4.58 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Gerald McBurrows, Falcons

Strengths: Is active, aggressive and tough. Has developed into a sound playmaker vs. the run. Shows terrific instincts. Takes solid angles to ballcarriers. Shows good short-area burst. Shows good initial pop as a tackler; breaks down and wraps up well in the open field. Is adequate in short-area zone coverage. Has good ball skills. Is a tough hitter over the middle.

Weaknesses: Is short and lacks great speed. Doesn't have the size to play in the box in the NFL; will struggle to take on blockers and disengage at the point of attack. Lacks good man-to-man skills. Footwork and technique are inconsistent. Has adequate range in zone coverage.

Bottom line: Mikell is worth late-round consideration as a nickel linebacker and special teams contributor. **FINAL GRADE: 2.7**

21. Colin Branch, Stanford

5-11½ 195 4.40 **7th round**

NFL comparison: David Terrell, Redskins

Strengths: Has adequate height and good speed. Is quick and fluid in coverage. Has good range in zone coverage. Improved recognition skills and instincts last season. Closes well when the ball is in the air. Shows good range in run support. Is active, aggressive and sound at open-field tackling.

Weaknesses: Has limited experience. Still needs to add bulk. Lacks the size to match up near the line in the NFL. Doesn't have great strength or explosive power as a tackler. Technique and footwork in man coverage are subpar.

Bottom line: Branch emerged as a solid full-time starting free safety as a senior. He has the potential to contribute on special teams and in some sub-package coverages. **FINAL GRADE: 2.4**

22. Julius Curry, Michigan

6-0 191 4.50 **7th round**

NFL comparison: Brent Alexander, Steelers

Strengths: Is a great natural athlete and has size, speed, strength and quickness. Shows good hands, quick feet, some burst and good change of direction skills as a punt returner. Flashed great man-coverage skills as a safety. Shows fluid hips; can turn and run. Is aggressive. Has a strong upper body. Shows good range in zone coverage.

Weaknesses: Lacks game experience at safety. Footwork and technique in man coverage need polish. Run/pass recognition skills are marginal. Takes many false steps. Can be undisciplined. Doesn't have great bulk vs. the run. Takes some poor angles. Needs to improve tackling techniques.

Bottom line: Curry is the least experienced of the three Michigan safety prospects, but he might have the most upside. He is a good late-round value because of his potential, but he's too much of an enigma to draft any higher. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 23. Norman LeJeune, LSU, 5-11¾, 197, 4.61 (40 time); **24.** Derek Pagel, Iowa, 6-0⅞, 209, 4.50; **25.** Siddeeq Shabazz, New Mexico State, 5-11¼, 202, 4.47; **26.** Jeremy Muyres, Georgia Tech, 6-2½, 205, 4.73; **27.** Ralph Parent, Boston College, 6-1¼, 201. 4.90; **28.** Marcus Reese, UCLA, 6-0⅜, 221, 4.77; **29.** Lee Jackson, Texas, 6-2½, 223, 4.75; **30.** James Young, Georgia Southern, 6-1, 200, 4.50.

Ratings and text on all players by The War Room.

Kickers/Punters

KICKERS

1. Seth Marler, Tulane

5-11 178 5.00 (40 time) 6th round

Strengths: Is very accurate. Shows outstanding mechanics and has quick approach.

Weaknesses: Lacks great leg strength and range. Had the luxury of kicking indoors (in Superdome) for many of his attempts. Hasn't needed to kick in high-pressure situations.

Bottom line: Marler handled both the kicking and punting duties for Tulane in 2002, but he is an NFL prospect only at kicker. **FINAL GRADE: 3.7**

2002 DRAFT

Kickers/punters taken 5

Round 1	0
Round 2	0
Round 3	0
Round 4	3
Round 5	0
Round 6	1
Round 7	1

2. Jonathan Ruffin, Cincinnati

5-10 180 5.07 6th round

Strengths: Has great mechanics. Makes clutch kicks. Accuracy and consistency set him apart.

Weaknesses: May not be able to handle kickoffs in the NFL; doesn't show consistent leg strength and directional skills.

Bottom line: Ruffin followed his Lou Groza Award-winning sophomore season in 2000 by connecting on 12 of 16 field-goal attempts as a junior in 2001 and 19 of 22 attempts as a senior in '02. **FINAL GRADE: 3.6**

3. Alex Walls, Tennessee

6-0½ 190 5.00 7th round

Strengths: Has outstanding mechanics and technique. Is efficient in 40- to 49-yard range. Is a proven performer in pressure situations.

Weaknesses: Lacks great consistency. Lacks leg strength on kickoffs and might not be able to handle that role in the NFL.

Bottom line: Walls, the Vols' kicker for four years, improved his technique, mechanics and accuracy every year, but he lacks exceptional accuracy and must improve his kickoffs. **FINAL GRADE: 2.8**

4. Todd Sievers, Miami (Fla.)

6-3 205 4.85 7th round

Strengths: Has one of the strongest legs in the class. Has decent mechanics. Is above-average on kickoffs.

Weaknesses: Has been inconsistent, especially inside the 40-yard line.

Bottom line: Sievers has good range and ability on kickoffs, but he must be more accurate to make it in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 2.4**

5. Peter Christofilakos, Illinois

5-8 175 4.80 7th round

Strengths: Is accurate, efficient and technically sound. Shows consistent soccer-style technique. Rarely misses inside 40 yards.

Weaknesses: Shows marginal leg strength and lacks good range on kickoffs and field-goal attempts longer than 45 yards.

Bottom line: Christofilakos is consistent and accurate but has just average leg strength. Illinois used John Gockman on longer attempts the past two years. **FINAL GRADE: 2.3**

6. Asen Asparuhov, Fresno State

6-4½ 215 5.20 7th round

Strengths: Has good leg strength. Came through in several clutch situations. Continues to show improved accuracy.

Weaknesses: Must improve quickness of approach and accuracy inside the 40.

Bottom line: Asparuhov, a former soccer player from Bulgaria who never kicked in a football game before 2000, must improve the quickness of his release and timing. **FINAL GRADE: 2.1**

Others: 7. Josh Brown, Nebraska, 6-0¾, 190, 4.85; **8.** Mike Barth, Arizona State, 5-11¼, 217, 5.14.

BIGGEST LEG: Todd Sievers, Miami (Fla.)
Accuracy is a concern, but he has the strongest leg on kickoffs and has hit field goals from as far out as 53 yards.

MOST ACCURATE: Peter Christofilakos, Illinois
Has marginal leg strength, but he led Big Ten in field-goal accuracy in 2001 and made nine of 12 attempts in 2002.

MOST VERSATILE: Seth Marler, Tulane
Not only is he the best kicking prospect, he also averaged 42.9 yards per punt last season.

PUNTERS

1. Mat McBriar, Hawaii

6-1 202 4.90 (40 time) 6th round

Strengths: Has the strongest leg of any punter to enter the draft in the past five years. Shows outstanding hang time.

Weaknesses: Struggled with control and handling snaps early in his college career but now shows above-average hands and accuracy.

Bottom line: McBriar, who was born in Melbourne, Australia and grew up playing Australian Rules football, did not rank among the top punters nationally in 2002 because Hawaii only punted 48 times. He would have ranked fifth (44.8-yard average) had he had enough attempts. **FINAL GRADE: 3.8**

2. Brooks Barnard, Maryland

6-2¾ 194 4.72 6th round

Strengths: Does a terrific job of controlling punts and shows excellent directional skills inside the 20-yard line.

Weaknesses: Is a three-step punter who can go to two steps, but there is a noticeable difference in leg strength.

Bottom line: Barnard must improve his hang time, but the rest of his physical skills are outstanding. **FINAL GRADE: 3.6**

3. Andy Groom, Ohio State

5-11½ 194 4.63 7th round

Strengths: Showed big improvements in mechanics and directional skills as a senior.

Weaknesses: Must learn to kick within his coverage. Must get rid of the ball quicker.

Bottom line: Groom has an NFL leg, but he must show better hang time and a quicker release. **FINAL GRADE: 2.7**

4. Mark Mariscal, Colorado

6-1⅜ 197 5.00 7th round

Strengths: Has a strong leg. Gets good hang time. Also can kick off, and gets good depth.

Weaknesses: Has trouble with consistency and mechanics. Shows erratic directional skills.

Bottom line: Mariscal's stats (48.25 average) were inflated by playing in Colorado's high altitude. **FINAL GRADE: 2.6**

5. Nate Fikse, UCLA

5-8⅝ 196 4.85 7th round

Strengths: Gets rid of the ball quickly with two-step technique. Is excellent on kickoffs.

Weaknesses: Has trouble landing punts inside the 20. Must improve directional skills.

Bottom line: Fikse has the potential to punt and kick off in the NFL. **FINAL GRADE: 2.5**

6. Glenn Pakulak, Kentucky

6-2⅜ 232 4.95 7th round

Strengths: Can get downfield and hit return men. Shows above-average hang time.

Weaknesses: Takes too long to get rid of the ball. Shows inconsistent directional skills.

Bottom line: Pakulak, who loves to run downfield and take on blockers, must improve his direction and quickness. **FINAL GRADE: 2.2**

Others: 7. Damon Duval, Auburn, 6-1, 187, 4.90 (40 time); **8.** Joey Huber, Colorado State, 6-5¼, 244, 5.00.

BIGGEST LEG: Mat McBriar, Hawaii
Is raw and still needs to improve technique, but we haven't seen a leg like this coming out of college in over five years.

BEST DIRECTIONAL: Brooks Barnard, Maryland
A consistent punter with excellent directional skills. Only five of his 55 punts resulted in touchbacks last season.

SLEEPER: Eddie Johnson, Idaho State
Led Division I-AA in 2001 with a 46.3-yard average and was fourth in the nation last year with a 46.2-yard average.

TWR's grading system: 9.0-8.0—Franchise player; 7.9-7.0—Potential Pro Bowl player; 6.9-6.0—Could start as rookie; 5.9-5.0—Eventual starter; 4.9-4.0—Quality backup; 3.9-3.0—Chance to make roster; 2.9-2.0—Not likely to make roster; 1.9-1.0—Free-agent possibility

Draft central

Got your board prepared? Ready to go "on the clock" with your team? Here's the pertinent data to get you draft-ready:

Where: At the Theater at Madison Square Garden, between 31st and 33rd Streets in New York City.

When: Rounds 1 through 3 will be held Saturday, April 26, with the first pick made shortly after noon Eastern Time and the last pick made at approximately 10 p.m. Rounds 4 through 7 will be held Sunday, April 27, beginning at 11 a.m. and ending at approximately 5 p.m.

Time: In the first round, each team is allowed 15 minutes per selection. In the second round, each team has 10 minutes. Picks are made every five minutes in rounds 3 through 7.

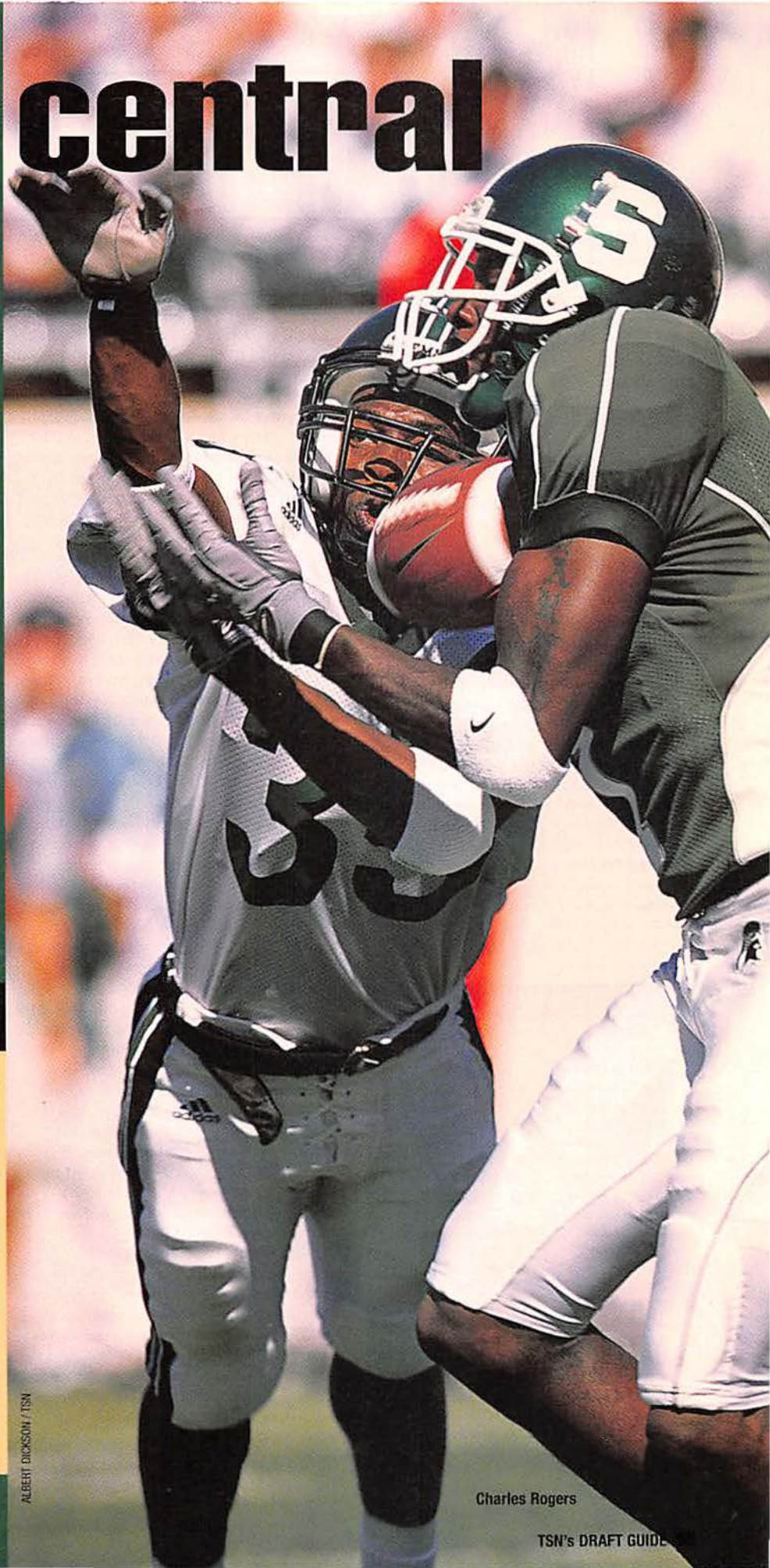
Tickets/cost: Tickets are free and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets will be distributed at the Madison Square Garden box office beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 26. Any remaining tickets will be made available Sunday beginning at 9 a.m. One ticket will be distributed per person and can be used for admission on both days. All seating is general admission. Doors will open at 10:30 a.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. Sunday. The Theatre at Madison Square Garden seats approximately 4,000 fans for the draft.

Television: ESPN will televise the draft Saturday from noon-7 p.m. ET. ESPN2 will televise the rest of the draft Saturday from 7 p.m. to its conclusion. ESPN will televise the draft Sunday from 11 a.m.-1 p.m., with ESPN2 carrying the remainder of the draft from 1 p.m. to its conclusion.

2003 first-round order and 2002 records

1. Cincinnati 2-14	17. New Orleans 9-7
2. Detroit 3-13	18. New Orleans∆
3. Houston 4-12	19. New England
4. Chicago 4-12	20. Denver 9-7
5. Dallas 5-11	21. Cleveland 9-7
6. Arizona 5-11	22. N.Y. Jets 9-7
7. Minnesota 6-10	23. Atlanta 9-6-1
8. Jacksonville 6-10	24. Indianapolis 10-6
9. Carolina 7-9	25. N.Y. Giants 10-6
10. Baltimore 7-9	26. San Francisco 10-6
11. Seattle 7-9	27. Pittsburgh 10-5-1
12. St. Louis 7-9	28. Tennessee 11-5
13. Washington 7-9	29. Green Bay 12-4
14. New England† 9-7	30. Philadelphia 12-4
15. San Diego 8-8	31. Oakland 11-5
16. Kansas City 8-8	32. Oakland§

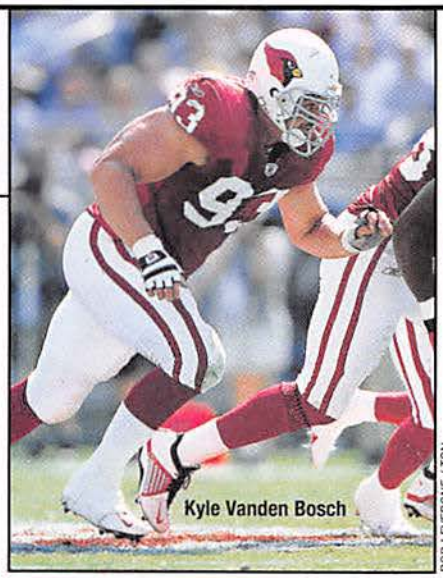
† from Buffalo, ∆ from Miami, § from Tampa Bay



ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

Charles Rogers

ARIZONA CARDINALS


Kyle Vanden Bosch

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Team needs

1. Defensive end. Starters Fred Wakefield and Kyle Vanden Bosch both play with great intensity. They are adequate against the run, but they lack the explosive first step and the closing speed to consistently get to the quarterback. In addition, Dennis Johnson failed to make an impact as a situational pass rusher. The lack of pressure forces defensive coordinator Larry Marmie to blitz more than normal, leaving the team's cornerbacks in single coverage and vulnerable to the big play. Arizona plays in the NFC West, which features some potent passing attacks, so it is imperative that it drafts a defensive end who can force quarterbacks to get rid of the ball quickly. If Arizona State's Terrell Suggs is available when the Cardinals pick in the first round (sixth overall), he is a great fit. Otherwise, the team needs to pick a cornerback and wait until the second round for a defensive end, probably Louisville's Dewayne White.

2. Quarterback. Jake Plummer, who was a free agent, led the Cardinals to the playoffs only once (1998) over the last six seasons. Arizona is happy with backup Josh McCown, and No. 3 Preston Parsons has progressed nicely, but neither is ready to start. So, the Cardinals need to get a starter in the free-agent market or re-sign Plummer. They won't find their starting quarterback in the draft.

3. Cornerback. Duane Starks has excellent natural cover skills. However, he is inconsistent and injury-prone. He missed six games last season), which left the Cardinals with nickel back Renaldo Hill starting more than the team desired. David Barrett, the other starting cornerback, has strong short-area cover skills but lacks the size to match up against bigger receivers. The Cardinals need to draft a corner who can cover an opponent's No. 2 receiver, allowing Barrett to play a nickel spot. What makes sense: Going with the better value and selecting Kansas State's Terence Newman in the first round.

4. Defensive tackle. Rookie Wendell Bryant missed training camp because of a contract holdout, and his production reflected it. The good news is he has the size and burst to eventually become a force inside. And he will improve with experience. The team's other defensive tackle, Russell Davis, lacks the endurance of a full-time starter. Backup Barron Tanner is a free agent, so Arizona needs to add a tackle who can contribute immediately and eventually claim the starting role from Davis. Stanford's Matt Leonard and Clemson's Nick Eason are ideal for this role, and both will be available in the third round.

5. Wide receiver. The Cardinals' top three receivers—David Boston, MarTay Jenkins and Frank Sanders—finished last season on injured reserve, and all three are unrestricted free agents. The team hopes to re-sign Boston and wants Jenkins back, but Sanders isn't expected to return. Kevin Kasper and Jason McAddley have big-play ability, but they are inconsistent. The Cardinals don't need great speed, but they need to use a third- or a fourth-round pick on a wide receiver such as Florida State's Talman Gardner or Virginia's Billy McMullen. Arizona needs a consistent receiver who will push for the No. 3 job and provide depth.

6. Safety. After a disappointing 2002 season, free safety Kwamie Lassiter, an unrestricted free agent, is not expected to be re-signed. The Cardinals want to move strong safety Adrian Wilson to free safety, but Wilson makes too many mistakes in coverage and tends to give up the big play. If Arizona is wise, it won't move Wilson. Instead, the Cardinals will sign a veteran free-agent safety who excels in coverage and use a late-round pick on a player such as Virginia Tech's Willie Pile, who needs time to develop but shows an upside because of good range.

7. Middle linebacker. Starter Ronald McKinnon doesn't have great size, but he is active and makes a lot of plays. The problem is the lack of depth at this spot. Free agent Johnny Rutledge, who was the team's second-round pick in 1999, has been a disappointment. McKinnon is the starter for now and the near future, but the Cardinals need a durable and physical middle linebacker. Georgia's Tony Gilbert should be available in the middle or late rounds and could contribute right away for Arizona on special teams and in special packages.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	❑ Josh McCown	LE	❑ Fred Wakefield
	❑ Preston Parsons		❑ Dennis Johnson
FB	■ Joel Makovicka	LT	❑ Russell Davis
	■ Dennis McKinley		❑ Barron Tanner
RB	■ Marcel Shipp	RT	■ Wendell Bryant
	❑ Damien Anderson		❑ Marcus Bell
WR	● David Boston	RE	❑ Kyle Vanden Bosch
	❑ Jason McAddley		❑ Dennis Johnson
WR	❑ MarTay Jenkins	LLB	❑ Raynoch Thompson
	❑ Kevin Kasper		❑ LeVar Woods
TE	■ Freddie Jones	MLB	■ Ronald McKinnon
	❑ Steve Bush		❑ Michael Young
LT	■ L.J. Shelton	RLB	■ Levar Fisher
	● Leonard Davis		❑ LeVar Woods
LG	■ Pete Kendall	LCB	■ Duane Starks
	❑ Chris Dishman		❑ Renaldo Hill
C	■ Mike Gruttadauria	SS	■ Adrian Wilson
	❑ Jason Starkey		❑ Justin Lucas
RG	● Leonard Davis	FS	❑ Justin Lucas
	❑ Chris Dishman		❑ Mike Stone
RT	■ Anthony Clement	RCB	❑ David Barrett
	❑ John Fina		❑ Renaldo Hill
K	■ Bill Gramatica	P	■ Scott Player

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY D+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	10	11	8	10	8
Starters	1	3	3	4	1
Backups	0	4	0	3	7
Other teams	2	0	1	1	0
Out of NFL	7	4	4	2	0

Of the first-round picks since 1998 that still are with the team, only 2002 pick DT Wendell Bryant and fourth-year OT L.J. Shelton finished last season on the active roster; G Leonard Davis, WR David Boston and RB Thomas Jones sustained season-ending injuries. Bryant and Davis still show promise, and Shelton is solid. But Boston has been a distraction, and Jones isn't likely to return.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Wendell Bryant, DT (14/4) Missed training camp because of a lengthy holdout and never made the impact the team hoped for and really needed.

2. Levar Fisher, LB (7/0) Played just seven games because of a knee injury. Could push Raynoch Thompson for a starting outside linebacker job.

3a. Josh McCown, QB (2/0) Team likes what it has seen, but he's nowhere near ready for starting job.

3b. Dennis Johnson, DE (13/0) Was very disappointing as a rookie. Must show vast improvement.

4. Nate Dwyer, DT (0/0) Two-gap tackle who will make biggest contributions on run downs.

5. Jason McAddley, WR (9/8) Gained experience because of injuries at receiver. Has good size and some upside. Will push for No. 3 receiver job.

6. Josh Scobey, RB (0/0) Buried deep on the depth chart at running back and must show marked improvement to make 2003 roster.

7. Mike Banks, TE (12/0) Has adequate size and good blocking skills but is not much of a receiver.

The outlook

The Cardinals used four of their top five picks on defense last year and likely will give defense similar attention this year. Look for them to select a defensive end with their first pick (sixth overall) and a cornerback with their second-round pick, or vice versa.

Then they can focus on getting a No. 2 receiver to complement Boston, if he re-signs. Because of the deep pool of talent at defensive tackle in the draft, they can wait until the fourth round to add depth there.

ATLANTA FALCONS

Team needs

1. Wide receiver. Brian Finneran is a productive possession receiver, but he lacks speed, and Shawn Jefferson was released. Trevor Gaylor and Quentin McCord have some explosiveness, but they drop too many passes. The Falcons need a receiver who consistently will make plays in the vertical passing game. Expect the team to pursue a free agent. In the draft, Florida's Taylor Jacobs and Florida State's Anquan Boldin showed the ability to make the big play at the college level, and at least one should be available when the Falcons pick 23rd in the first round.

2. Cornerback. The team is thin at corner and must consider adding one with its first pick if it does not sign a free agent to start. The team cut Ashley Ambrose, and though Ray Buchanan shows excellent instincts in coverage, his natural skills are on the decline. There was talk of moving Buchanan to safety because he gave up too many big plays last year, but as of now, the team can't afford to do that. If the team drafts a corner with its first pick, Washington State's Marcus Trufant, Oklahoma's Andre Woolfolk or Illinois' Eugene Wilson might be available. If it addresses corner later, SMU's Kevin Garrett and Texas' Roderick Babers can cover the slot receiver and should be around in the middle rounds.

3. Nose tackle. Ellis Johnson is more effective rushing the passer than playing the run. And although Ed Jasper plays with a strong base and good leverage, he lacks bulk, and the run defense suffers at times as a result. Jasper also has had health problems. Atlanta needs a two-gap defensive tackle with the size to anchor against double-teams and keep blockers off the linebackers. Oregon State's Eric Manning and Florida's Ian Scott are first-day prospects, and either could improve the depth at nose tackle and contribute as situational run stuffers.

4. Safety. Strong safety Gerald McBurrows is solid against the run and is an excellent special teams player, but he is a liability in coverage and is a better fit as a situational run stuffer. Although free safety Keion Carpenter played well last year, he is coming off a serious neck injury and is an unrestricted free agent. Atlanta likely will sign a free agent should Carpenter not return but will need to improve depth with a Day 2 prospect such as Michigan's Charles Drake at free safety. At strong safety, a possible replacement for McBurrows could be Florida's Todd Johnson in the third or fourth round.

5. Center. Todd McClure, an unrestricted free agent, is extremely undersized. The Falcons are expected to move Roberto Garza back to center from left guard should McClure not re-sign. Garza is bigger and has good quickness but has had problems staying healthy, so Atlanta must improve its depth by drafting a center such as Colorado's Wayne Lucier or Northwestern's Austin King on Day 2.

6. Fullback. Bob Christian is an efficient blocker and reliable receiver but doesn't stand out in any area, and concussions could cause him to retire. George Layne is an inconsistent blocker, so the Falcons need to draft a versatile reserve to complement Layne, and Mississippi State's Justin Griffith and Western Kentucky's Jeremi Johnson are projected late-round picks who can do that.

7. Outside linebacker. Both Sam Rogers and John Thierry, who is coming off hip surgery, are unrestricted free agents. Will Overstreet is coming off a shoulder injury. Ideally, Overstreet will move into the starting lineup, but the Falcons need to add quality in the free-agent market and with a mid- to late-round pick such as Georgia's Chris Clemons or Tennessee's Eddie Moore.

8. Inside linebacker. With little depth, the Falcons should use a late-round pick on a player such as Illinois' Jerry Schumacher or Florida's Byron Hardmon, then sign a mid-level free agent to provide depth.

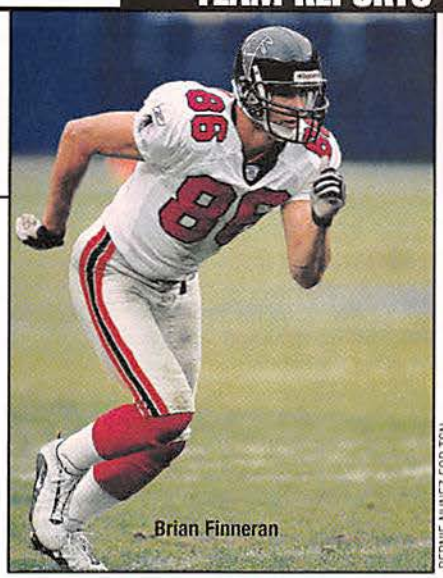
PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	● Michael Vick	LE	● Patrick Kerney
	❑ Doug Johnson		❑ John Thierry
FB	❑ George Layne	NT	■ Ellis Johnson
	❑ Bob Christian		❑ Ed Jasper
RB	■ Warrick Dunn	RE	■ Brady Smith
	■ T.J. Duckett		❑ Travis Hall
WR	❑ Trevor Gaylor	SLB	❑ Matt Stewart
	❑ Quentin McCord		❑ Artie Ulmer
WR	■ Brian Finneran	ILB	■ Chris Draft
	❑ Darrin Chiaverini		❑ John Holecek
TE	■ Reggie Kelly	ILB	● Keith Brooking
	■ Alge Crumpler		❑ Mark Simoneau
LT	■ Bob Whitfield	WLB	❑ Will Overstreet
	❑ Michael Thompson		❑ Sam Rogers
LG	■ Travis Claridge	LCB	■ Ray Buchanan
	❑ Martin Bibla		❑ Allen Rossum
C	❑ Todd McClure	SS	❑ Gerald McBurrows
	❑ Martin Bibla		❑ Kevin McCadem
RG	■ Kynan Forney	FS	■ Keion Carpenter
	■ Roberto Garza		❑ Johndale Carty
RT	■ Todd Weiner	RCB	❑ Juran Bolden
	❑ Kevin Shaffer		❑ Fred Weary
K	❑ Jay Feely	P	■ Chris Mohr

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

The Falcons desperately need speed at wide receiver, but there might not be a worthwhile pick at No. 23 overall. Michigan State's Charles Rogers and Miami's Andre Johnson both should be gone, so the Falcons could settle for Taylor or Boldin at No. 23. The team could trade down or address needs at cornerback or nose tackle with its first pick, then draft a receiver in Round 2. Most likely, the Falcons will take a receiver in the first round, a two-gap defensive tackle who can provide immediate help inside in the second round and then, in the third and fourth rounds, focus on depth and possible future replacements for their marginal safeties and their cornerbacks. After that, the team will have at least three picks left in the final three rounds to draft a backup center, an athletic fullback and a versatile linebacker.



Brian Finneran

BERNIE NUNEZ FOR TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	9	9	6	10	8
Starters	1	3	1	4	0
Backups	0	1	2	3	6
Other teams	3	2	1	2	1
Out of NFL	5	3	2	1	1

The trade for the No. 1 pick overall in 2001, which was QB Michael Vick, will continue to pay huge dividends. DE Patrick Kerney, a first-round pick in 1999, has developed into an excellent pass rusher, and '98 first-round LB Keith Brooking has gone to consecutive Pro Bowls. However, with the possible exception of Quentin McCord, the team's late-round picks at receiver have been duds.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. T.J. Duckett, RB (12/3) Took a back seat to Warrick Dunn for most of rookie year. Proved to be a tough inside runner, but '03 role is not yet clear.

3. Will Overstreet, LB (2/0) Injuries robbed him of starting outside linebacker job he won in preseason. Will get chance to reclaim the position this summer.

4. Martin Bibla, G (10/0) A solid interior reserve. Currently is behind Travis Claridge at left guard.

5a. Kevin McCadam, S (11/1) Ended last season as the backup strong safety; has a chance to push Gerald McBurrows for the starting job this season.

5b. Kurt Kittner, QB (0/0) Didn't throw a pass in '02. If Doug Johnson leaves as a free agent, Kittner should move up to No. 2 behind Michael Vick.

6. Kahlil Hill, WR (0/0) Cut early in season; now a backup with Seattle.

7a. Michael Coleman, WR (0/0) No longer in NFL.

7b. Kevin Shaffer, OT (6/0) Is tall and lean and has some upside but must add bulk. Is backing up Todd Weiner at right tackle for now.

BALTIMORE RAVENS

Team needs

1. Right offensive tackle. Last year's starter, Ethan Brooks, could be re-signed as an unrestricted free agent, but Brooks doesn't play with a mean streak and doesn't consistently get movement at the point of attack. As a result, he likely will return as a backup. With the quarterback and receiver positions unsettled, the Ravens must be able to run the ball effectively behind a dominant run blocker. Stanford's Kwame Harris would fit the bill, if he's available at the 10th pick.

2. Wide receiver. Although Travis Taylor showed improvement last season, he has not proved he can be a No. 1 receiver. No. 2 receiver Brandon Stokley is inconsistent and is an unrestricted free agent coming off season-ending foot surgery. If Stokley isn't re-signed, the Ravens could draft a playmaking receiver such as Penn State's Bryant Johnson, Illinois' Brandon Lloyd or Tennessee's Kelley Washington in the second round.

3. Nose tackle. Kelly Gregg exceeded expectations last year, but he is too light to consistently hold his ground at the point of attack. The Ravens' elite linebackers need a nose tackle who can keep blockers away from them, allowing them to flow to the ball. Kentucky's Dewayne Robertson would be the perfect fit if he were to fall to the 10th overall pick. If the Ravens don't use their first-round pick to address the situation, Florida's Ian Scott is a possibility early in the third round.

4. Quarterback. The long-term impact of Chris Redman's back injury, which forced him to miss 10 games last season, is not yet known. Baltimore is working on re-signing unrestricted free agent Jeff Blake, but at 32, he isn't a long-term solution. The Ravens may be hesitant to pursue a high-profile free agent after the Elvis Grbac fiasco, so they could go for someone such as Florida's Rex Grossman or California's Kyle Boller, although either would be a reach at No. 10. Otherwise, look for the team to go for a quarterback such as Eastern Illinois' Tony Romo or Portland State's Juston Wood in the middle rounds.

5. Defensive end. Michael McCrary is expected to retire after ending last season on injured reserve. The team is happy with Anthony Weaver, but the starter on the other side, Adalius Thomas, has been inconsistent and doesn't fit the 3-4 defense well. Someone who does is Alabama's Kindal Moorehead, who would be a great pick in the third round.

6. Cornerback. The Ravens put a franchise tag on Chris McAlister, but James Trapp is a free agent and the team is considering moving Gary Baxter from cornerback to safety. The Ravens could use an early Day 2 selection on a cornerback such as Colorado's Donald Strickland or TCU's Jason Goss to provide depth and eventually push for a starting job.

7. Guard. Edwin Mulitalo is an unrestricted free agent who may not return, and there is little depth behind him. Baltimore could make Casey Rabach the starting center and move Mike Flynn to guard, but it will need to improve depth regardless. Northwestern's Jeff Roehl and Harvard's Jamil Soriano are projected late-round picks who could provide help.

8. Fullback. Sam Gash is an unrestricted free agent who isn't expected to be re-signed. Though Alan Ricard is a physical lead blocker, he has problems staying healthy. Using a late-round pick on a powerful lead blocker such as Maryland's James Lynch or Notre Dame's Tom Lopienski would be wise.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	❑ Jeff Blake	LE	❑ Adalius Thomas
	❑ Chris Redman		❑ Michael McCrary
FB	❑ Alan Ricard	NT	❑ Kelly Gregg
	❑ Sam Gash		❑ Ma'ake Kemoeatu
RB	■ Jamal Lewis	RE	■ Anthony Weaver
	❑ Chester Taylor		❑ Adalius Thomas
WR	■ Travis Taylor	LOLB	■ Cornell Brown
	❑ Ron Johnson		❑ Shannon Taylor
WR	❑ Randy Hymes	LILB	■ Ed Hartwell
	❑ Javin Hunter		❑ Bernardo Harris
TE	● Todd Heap	RILB	● Ray Lewis
	❑ John Jones		❑ Bernardo Harris
LT	● Jonathan Ogden	ROLB	● Peter Boulware
	❑ Ethan Brooks		❑ Shannon Taylor
LG	■ Edwin Mulitalo	LCB	■ Gary Baxter
	■ Casey Rabach		■ James Trapp
C	■ Mike Flynn	SS	❑ Anthony Mitchell
	■ Casey Rabach		❑ Will Demps
RG	❑ Bennie Anderson	FS	■ Ed Reed
	❑ Jason Thomas		❑ Chad Williams
RT	❑ Ethan Brooks	RCB	● Chris McAlister
	■ Edwin Mulitalo		❑ Alvin Porter
K	■ Matt Stover	P	❑ Dave Zastudil

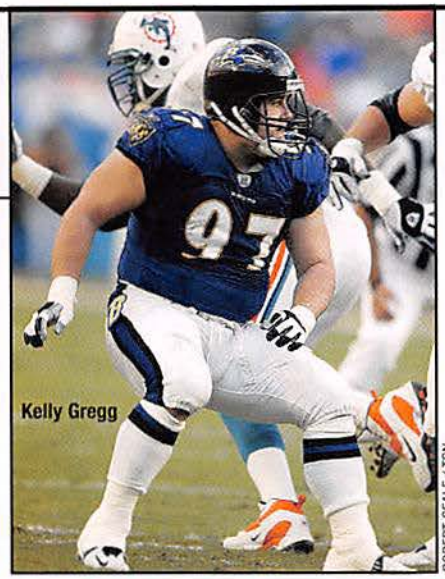
● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

General manager Ozzie Newsome is known for drafting the best available player instead of drafting for need. He and the Ravens' front office have also built a reputation for finding contributors in the late rounds, as well as from the pool of undrafted free agents. That said, the team has many areas that need to be addressed on draft day.

The Ravens could go in a variety of directions with the 10th overall pick. If Harris is available at No. 10, he could be the choice. If that happens, the team could use its other two Day 1 picks to address the defensive line and wide receiver. If Harris is not available at 10, don't be surprised if the team takes the best available defensive lineman. What makes this scenario interesting is that if the Ravens do take a one-gap defensive tackle such as Miami's William Joseph or Washington State's Rien Long, they conceivably could move back to a 4-3 alignment. However, if they draft a two-gap lineman such as Robertson, they would stick with the 3-4, with Robertson playing at nose tackle.

After filling holes at right tackle, in the defensive line and at receiver, the Ravens will look to add depth at cornerback, guard and fullback—and possibly even draft a developmental quarterback—on Day 2.



Kelly Gregg

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY A

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	4	6	7	10
Starters	0	2	3	3	2
Backups	0	1	1	2	7
Other teams	4	0	1	0	1
Out of NFL	3	1	1	2	0

The decision to promote Ozzie Newsome to general manager and extend his contract was a smart one. The Ravens exceeded expectations last season thanks to contributions from mid-round picks such as LB Ed Hartwell and strong play from their rookies. Newsome was instrumental in the drafting of impact first-rounders RB Jamal Lewis, TE Todd Heap, CB Chris McAlister and S Ed Reed.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Ed Reed, S (16/16) Started from Day 1 and was the playmaker the Ravens envisioned.

2. Anthony Weaver, DT (16/16) Converted to left end, where he fit nicely into Ravens' 3-4 scheme.

4a. Dave Zastudil, P (16/0) Won the job and will punt for the Ravens again in 2003.

4b. Ron Johnson, WR (16/4) Was the fourth receiver last season. Has great size and should compete for more playing time.

5. Terry Jones, TE (14/6) Should compete for the backup job behind Todd Heap.

6a. Lamont Brightful, WR (12/0) Served very nicely as the main kickoff and punt return specialist.

6b. Javin Hunter, WR (12/3) Won a roster spot but caught just five passes last season.

6c. Chester Taylor, RB (15/2) Made the team as Jamal Lewis' backup; will fill that role again in '03.

6d. Chad Williams, S (16/0) Earned a roster spot as a backup to fellow rookie Reed.

7. Wes Pate, QB (0/0) Cut; now with Seahawks.

TSN's PRO FOOTBALL TICKET: www.sportingnews.com/nfl/ticket

BUFFALO BILLS

Pat Williams

JOHN DUNN FOR TSN

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. Pat Williams is coming off a strong year, but Ron Edwards and reserve Justin Bannan lack the bulk to consistently hold their ground. As a result, Williams faces almost constant double-teams and wears down late in games. The Bills, who allowed an average of 4.5 yards per carry in 2002, need a two-gap tackle who can help keep blockers off undersize middle linebacker London Fletcher. Texas A&M's Ty Warren should be around in the second round, and Florida's Ian Scott likely will be available in the third. Both are capable of pushing for playing time.

2. Outside linebacker. The team is expected to replace free agent Keith Newman with another free agent on the strong side, but it also would like to improve its speed on the weak side. Eddie Robinson still is adequate against the run, but he has lost a step and struggles to stay with running backs in coverage. The Bills need a linebacker who can replace him on passing downs. Projected mid- to late-round picks Pisa Tinoisamoa of Hawaii and Eddie Moore of Tennessee would fit.

3. Cornerback. Antoine Winfield and Nate Clements are a very good starting tandem, but they don't make enough big plays. The team also needs to replace nickel back Chris Watson, who struggled last year. A playmaker who can make an immediate impact in the nickel package would be a significant help. Pittsburgh's Torrie Cox and Tulane's Lynaris Elpheage are projected as mid- to late-round picks because they lack size, but they have the quickness to cover opposing slot receivers and the ball skills to make big plays.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	● Drew Bledsoe	LE	■ Chidi Ahanotu
	■ Alex Van Pelt		❑ Ryan Denny
FB	■ Larry Centers	LT	❑ Ron Edwards
	❑ Phillip Crosby		❑ Justin Bannan
RB	■ Travis Henry	RT	● Pat Williams
	■ Sammy Morris		❑ Justin Bannan
WR	● Eric Moulds	RE	■ Aaron Schobel
	❑ Charles Johnson		❑ Grant Irons
WR	● Peerless Price	SLB	❑ DaShon Polk
	■ Josh Reed		❑ Dom'nque Stevenson
TE	■ Dave Moore	MLB	■ London Fletcher
	❑ Brady McDonnell		❑ Brandon Spoon
LT	■ Jonas Jennings	WLB	■ Eddie Robinson
	❑ Marcus Price		❑ Anthony Denman
LG	● Ruben Brown	LCB	■ Antoine Winfield
	❑ Mike Pucillo		❑ Jason Bostic
C	■ Trey Teague	SS	■ Coy Wire
	❑ Bill Conaty		❑ Billy Jenkins
RG	■ Marques Sullivan	FS	■ Pierson Prioleau
	❑ Mike Pucillo		❑ Tony Driver
RT	■ Mike Williams	RCB	■ Nate Clements
	■ Marcus Price		❑ Chris Watson
K	■ Mike Hollis	P	■ Brian Moorman

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

4. Defensive end. Aaron Schobel is a productive pass rusher who continues to improve against the run. But unrestricted free agent Chidi Ahanotu is inconsistent, and Ryan Denney struggled last year. A healthy return by Marcus Jones, who had 13 sacks in 2000 but spent all of '02 on injured reserve, would help, but the team needs to draft a situational pass rusher such as Cincinnati's Antwan Peek or Fresno State's Nick Burley who can draw attention away from Schobel in the middle rounds.

5. Tight end. Dave Moore is a strong blocker and an underrated receiver in the short and intermediate passing game, but Jay Riemersma likely will be a cap casualty, and former defensive lineman Brady McDonnell is raw. Quarterback Drew Bledsoe, who likes to throw to the tight end, would make good use of a receiver such as Oklahoma's Trent Smith or Oregon's George Wrighster, who both have the speed to work the seam and would be excellent complements to Moore.

6. Center. Backup Billy Conaty, a unrestricted free agent, has sound technique but lacks the natural tools to start and likely won't improve at this point of his career. The team needs a developmental player who will provide depth and develop into a quality reserve or possible starter. Purdue's Gene Mruczkowski or Northern Iowa's Chad Setterstrom should be available in the later rounds.

7. Guard. Marques Sullivan, who moved over from tackle after Jerry Ostroski's retirement, played well enough last season to retain his starting job, but there is little depth at guard. Ruben Brown went to his seventh straight Pro Bowl after last season, but he is 31. Buffalo needs to start grooming a replacement for Brown and possibly Sullivan should he move back to tackle. Michigan's Dave Petruziello and Indiana's Enoch DeMar are projected late-round picks who have excellent potential.

8. Wide receiver. The team decided to keep its explosive passing game intact by tagging Peerless Price as its franchise player. Still, you have to wonder whether the Bills can afford to keep Price and Eric Moulds, who is entering the third year of a six-year, $40 million deal, over the long haul. In addition, Moulds turns 30 in July, so the team could stand to add a young wideout to develop alongside promising second-year man Josh Reed.

The outlook

With several needs to address on defense, the Bills, who gave up their first-round pick in a trade for Bledsoe, can't afford to miss on either of their Day 1 picks. General manager Tom Donahoe is not likely to use the team's first pick (46th overall) as trade bait. With such a talented and deep class of defensive tackles, there's a good chance the Bills can find a possible future starter and immediate contributor in the second round. The only thing that could change that scenario is if a top outside linebacker such as Georgia's Boss Bailey, a top receiver like Florida State's Anquan Boldin or a top cornerback such as Oklahoma's Andre Woolfolk falls to the second round. Judging by the strength of each position and the fact that it is much easier to find a receiver in the free-agent market than a cornerback or outside linebacker, it wouldn't be a surprise if the Bills used each of their first three picks on defenders. They then could trade one or more of their third-, fourth- or fifth-round picks to stockpile choices in Rounds 6 and 7.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	6	9	8	12	10
Starters	0	3	0	6	2
Backups	0	1	3	3	7
Other teams	3	2	4	2	0
Out of NFL	3	3	1	1	1

Since Tom Donahoe became general manager in 2001, the Bills drafted three starters for what should become a solid offensive line, and second-rounders DE Aaron Schobel and WR Josh Reed are key contributors. CB Nate Clements, a first-round pick in 2001, strengthens a secondary that had '99 first-rounder Antoine Winfield. First-round DE Erik Flowers (2000) was a washout.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Mike Williams, OT (14/14) Massive right tackle should anchor the offensive line for years.

2a. Josh Reed, WR (16/2) Excelled as No. 3 wide receiver. Will start if P. Price isn't brought back.

2b. Ryan Denney, DE (8/0) Backed up Chidi Ahanotu. Could win more time. Must be more consistent.

3. Coy Wire, S (16/15) Ended season as the starter. Is basically a linebacker who has safety speed.

5. Justin Bannan, DT (15/0) Provided depth because of his ability to control gaps on run downs.

6. Kevin Thomas, CB (6/1) Came on late in nickel and dime packages. But needs more experience.

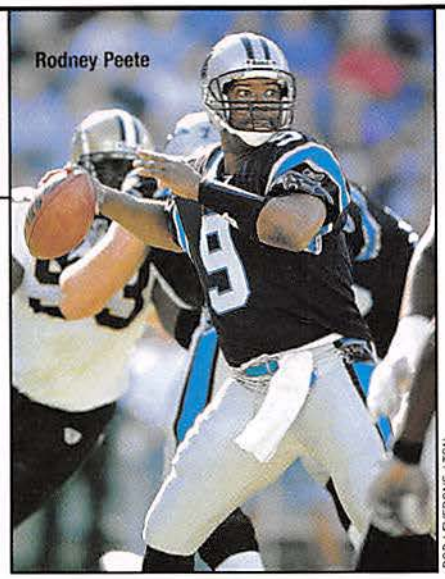
7a. Mike Pucillo, G (0/0) Has some upside; backup right guard heading into 2003.

7b. Rodney Wright, WR (0/0) Zero catches. Must show big improvement to make the roster in 2003.

7c. Jarrett Ferguson, FB (0/0) Cut in preseason and wasn't signed by another team.

7d. Dominique Stevenson, LB (4/0) Good athlete who provides depth; can play on special teams.

CAROLINA PANTHERS


Rodney Peete

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Team needs

1. Quarterback. Carolina will try to re-sign Rodney Peete, but Peete, 37, isn't the long-term solution, and backup Chris Weinke may not be brought back. The Panthers like the potential of No. 3 quarterback Randy Fasani, but he would struggle if forced to start, and he isn't an ideal backup right now. The Panthers could trade up or down in the first round or wait until the second round and hope California's Kyle Boller is available.

2. Right offensive tackle. The release of Chris Terry last season forced Melvin Tuten into the starting lineup. Though Tuten did an adequate job, he is a much better fit as a backup. He isn't a dominant run blocker, and it's critical that the running game take some pressure off the passing game. The team could take Utah's Jordan Gross or Stanford's Kwame Harris with the ninth overall pick if it doesn't go for a quarterback.

3. Running back. After a strong start, Lamar Smith struggled with off-field problems and isn't expected to return. DeShaun Foster missed all of last year with a knee injury, and it remains to be seen if he can make a full recovery. Foster showed great promise in his rookie preseason, but the team can't afford to put all its stock in him. It's possible it would use an early pick on a running back, but more likely it will address the position in the free-agent market.

4. Wide receiver. Steve Smith established himself as a quality No. 2 receiver last year, but Muhsin Muhammad, the team's best deep threat, could become a salary-cap casualty. If Muhammad is released, Carolina likely would replace him with a free agent, unless a receiver such as Miami's Andre Johnson slips to the team in the first round. Missouri's Justin Gage and San Diego State's Kassim Osgood are projected middle-round picks capable of contributing in Carolina's three-receiver sets.

5. Tight end. Although Kris Mangum would be an adequate replacement for Wesley Walls, who is expected to become a cap casualty or to retire, the Panthers need more. Backup Keith Heinrich spent most of his rookie season on injured reserve. With their conservative approach on offense—and because Heinrich is a better receiver than a blocker—the Panthers might want to use a late-round pick on a blocking tight end such as Central Florida's Michael Gaines. But if a pass catcher such as Florida's Aaron Walker falls to Carolina in the third round, he might be hard to pass up.

6. Cornerback. Starters Terry Cousin and Reggie Howard played better than expected last season, but Terry Fair and Emmanuel McDaniel are unrestricted free agents. It also is unknown if Rashard Anderson will return from his yearlong suspension. Dante Wesley, a 2002 fourth-rounder, still needs to make some strides if he is going to take over as the nickel back. The Panthers need a corner who will push for playing time, and SMU's Kevin Garrett and UCLA's Ricky Manning should be there in the third or fourth round.

7. Guard. Jamar Nesbit is an unrestricted free agent who didn't play well enough to retain a starting job, but the team doesn't have anyone to replace him.Kevin Donnalley, the right guard, is 34 and has health issues. The team also needs a long-term replacement for him. South Carolina's Cedric Williams and Stanford's Greg Schindler are projected late-round picks with great run-blocking skills.

8. Free safety. Deon Grant gives up too many big plays and misses too many tackles. Backup Damien Richardson is more consistent, but his lack of speed is a concern. The Panthers need a safety who will push Grant in training camp. Although the team doesn't want to address this need with a high pick, if a free safety with great range such as Utah's Antwoine Sanders slips to the fourth round, it might think about selecting him.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	❑ Rodney Peete	LE	● Julius Peppers
	❑ Randy Fasani		■ Al Wallace
FB	❑ Brad Hoover	LT	■ Brentson Buckner
	❑ Nick Goings		❑ Shane Burton
RB	❑ DeShaun Foster	RT	● Kris Jenkins
	❑ Dee Brown		❑ Mario Fatafehi
WR	■ Muhsin Muhammad	RE	■ Mike Rucker
	❑ Karl Hankton		❑ Kemp Rasmussen
WR	■ Steve Smith	SLB	■ Mark Fields
	❑ Nathan Black		❑ Brian Allen
TE	❑ Kris Mangum	MLB	■ Dan Morgan
	❑ Keith Heinrich		❑ Brad Jackson
LT	■ Todd Steussie	WLB	❑ Will Witherspoon
	❑ Derrick Fletcher		❑ Brian Allen
LG	❑ Jeno James	LCB	■ Terry Cousin
	❑ Louis Williams		❑ Dante Wesley
C	● Jeff Mitchell	SS	■ Mike Minter
	❑ Louis Williams		❑ Deke Cooper
RG	■ Kevin Donnalley	FS	❑ Deon Grant
	❑ Louis Williams		❑ Damien Richardson
RT	❑ Melvin Tuten	RCB	❑ Reggie Howard
	❑ Derrick Fletcher		❑ Brad Franklin
K	■ John Kasay	P	● Todd Sauerbrun

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

There will be as many pre-draft trade rumors surrounding the Panthers as there will be the Bengals, and the teams could end up making a deal. The Bengals are entertaining offers for the No. 1 overall pick, and if the Panthers were to make the move for USC quarterback Carson Palmer, the deal likely would cost them at least this year's second-round pick, or possibly next year's first-rounder, in addition to their 2003 first-rounder (No. 9 overall). That would be a steep price for a team that needs to fill several key offensive positions.

Other options include trading down in the first round for Florida's Rex Grossman or staying put, drafting an offensive tackle with the ninth pick, then taking Boller, Louisville's Dave Ragone or Texas' Chris Simms at No. 41.

Assuming the Panthers address their needs at quarterback and tackle with their first two picks, they will have three picks in the next two rounds to invest at running back, wide receiver and either cornerback or tight end. It's conceivable they could get their offensive tackle, quarterback, tight end, No. 3 receiver and reserve cornerback in the first four rounds.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	8	5	7	8	9
Starters	0	2	1	4	2
Backups	1	0	3	3	5
Other teams	2	1	2	1	1
Out of NFL	5	2	1	0	1

First-round DE Julius Peppers (2002) greatly improved the pass rush, and 2001 second-round DT Kris Jenkins helped to improve a once terrible run defense. But the Panthers have not been as successful on offense. They waived 1999 second-round OT Chris Terry because of off-the-field problems, and 2002 second-round RB DeShaun Foster spent his rookie season on I.R.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Julius Peppers, DE (12/12) Missed final four games due to suspension but not before establishing himself as one of league's most dominant ends.

2. DeShaun Foster, RB (0/0) Won starting job with impressive preseason but suffered possible career-ending knee injury. Future is very much up in air.

3. Will Witherspoon, LB (15/8) Moved inside, started eight games in place of injured Dan Morgan. Was better vs. pass than run. Has good quickness.

4. Dante Wesley, CB (13/1) Played in nickel package and will push for No. 3 CB job this season.

5a. Randy Fasani, QB (4/1) Looked erratic and lost in limited action. Likely to return as No. 3 QB.

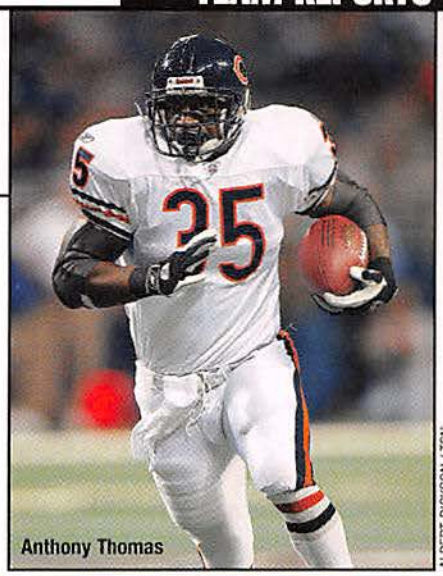
5b. Kyle Johnson, FB (0/0) Cut; now with Denver.

6. Keith Heinrich, TE (4/0) Was the No. 3 tight end last season but still is raw. Needs at least another season before he competes for a starting job.

7a. Steve Campion, G (0/0) Cut; now with Seattle.

7b. Brad Franklin, CB (0/0) Was not activated for a game last season but could push for a reserve job.

CHICAGO BEARS


Anthony Thomas

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

Team needs

1. Quarterback. Starter Jim Miller's shoulder injury is more severe than anticipated, and he isn't expected to be ready until camp. Backup Chris Chandler is coming off his fifth concussion in six years and could be released if he doesn't retire. No. 3 man Henry Burris doesn't make sound decisions under pressure. Although the team could use the fourth overall pick to select a franchise quarterback such as Marshall's Byron Leftwich, it is just as likely this need will be filled with a free agent who can push for the starting job.

2. Running back. Anthony Thomas didn't hit the hole with the same authority last season as he did as a rookie in 2001. The lack of a consistent running game forced the defense to stay on the field for longer stretches in '02. Backup Leon Johnson was an unrestricted free agent, and Adrian Peterson progressed last season but isn't ready to play a significant role. It won't be a shock if the team uses its third-round pick on a runner with big-play capability, such as USC's Justin Fargas.

3. Defensive end. Though Phillip Daniels is excellent against the run and Alex Brown is coming off a strong rookie season, neither is a dominant edge rusher. Brown has the closing speed to get to the quarterback but lacks a variety of pass-rush moves and would be far more effective with an explosive pass rusher on the other side drawing attention. Strongside linebacker Rosevelt Colvin is not expected to return, so it will be critical to replace his pass-rushing production. If the team's top pick is not used on a quarterback, drafting Arizona State defensive end Terrell Suggs would make sense. If the Bears wait longer to pick an end, Florida State's Alonzo Jackson and Cal's Tully Banta-Cain are projected Day 1 picks capable of making an immediate impact on passing downs.

4. Cornerback. The team has two adequate starters in Jerry Azumah and R.W. McQuarters, but Azumah doesn't make enough big plays and McQuarters missed seven games last year. The team lacks depth at this position, as reserve Reggie Austin may not fully recover from a knee injury until training camp and Roosevelt Williams is too raw to take over as nickel back. The team should look for a corner in the third or fourth round; Notre Dame's Shane Walton and SMU's Kevin Garrett are possibilities.

5. Tight end. John Davis is a free agent not expected to return, and backup Dustin Lyman finished last season on injured reserve with a torn ACL. Another reserve, John Gilmore, is an excellent blocker but offers little as a receiver. Lyman played well enough to warrant a contract extension but may be a better fit as a reserve. A free agent could be brought in to compete for the starting job. The Bears also could select an athletic tight end such as Michigan's Bennie Joppru or Auburn's Robert Johnson if one slips past Day 1.

6. Defensive tackle. Keith Traylor is expected to become a salary-cap casualty, but the other aging tackle, massive Ted Washington, is expected to return. Bryan Robinson was moved from end to tackle last year and played well enough to stay but lacks ideal bulk and will rotate in and out to stay fresh. Stanford's Matt Leonard and South Carolina's Langston Moore are two-gap defensive tackles capable of contributing as situational run stuffers and are projected to go on Day 2.

7. Outside linebacker. Colvin is not expected to return on the strong side, and weakside starter Warrick Holdman finished two of the last three seasons on injured reserve with knee problems. Ten-year veteran Mike Caldwell has experience playing on both sides, and Bryan Knight has the potential to develop into a productive starter. But Knight is a former defensive end who still is raw, and the team must improve its depth because of Holdman's durability problem. This need could be filled with a late-round pick such as Purdue's Joe Odom or Texas A&M's Jerrod Penright.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	❑ Jim Miller	LE	■ Phillip Daniels
	❑ Chris Chandler		❑ Joe Tafoya
FB	■ Daimon Shelton	LT	❑ Bryan Robinson
	❑ Stanley Pritchett		❑ Alfonso Boone
RB	■ Anthony Thomas	RT	■ Ted Washington
	❑ Adrian Peterson		❑ Alfonso Boone
WR	● Marty Booker	RE	■ Alex Brown
	❑ Ahmad Merritt		■ Phillip Daniels
WR	■ David Terrell	SLB	❑ Bryan Knight
	❑ Dez White		■ Mike Caldwell
TE	❑ John Gilmore	MLB	● Brian Urlacher
	❑ Dustin Lyman		❑ Bobby Howard
LT	■ Mike Gandy	WLB	■ Warrick Holdman
	■ Marc Colombo		❑ Bobby Howard
LG	■ Rex Tucker	LCB	■ R.W. McQuarters
	❑ Terrence Metcalf		❑ Roosevelt Williams
C	● Olin Kreutz	SS	■ Mike Green
	❑ Bernard Robertson		❑ Damon Moore
RG	■ Chris Villarrial	FS	● Mike Brown
	❑ Bernard Robertson		❑ Bobby Gray
RT	■ Marc Colombo	RCB	❑ Jerry Azumah
	❑ Steve Edwards		❑ Travis Coleman
K	■ Paul Edinger	P	■ Brad Maynard

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Was general manager Jerry Angelo creating a smoke screen when he said none of the top quarterback prospects had blown him away? The team could stockpile picks for later in the draft by trading its top choice to a team, such as the Panthers, that is interested in a franchise quarterback. Or Chicago simply could stay put at No. 4 and draft the best fit, which could be Suggs, Penn State defensive tackle Jimmy Kennedy or Kansas State cornerback Terence Newman.

If the Bears choose that route, the quarterback need could be filled in Round 2 with Cal's Kyle Boller, Louisville's Dave Ragone or Texas' Chris Simms. It also will be important for the team to draft a defensive end or outside linebacker who can help bolster the pass rush and a cornerback who can help right away in the nickel package. In the middle or late rounds, the team could select a running back with some speed and a tight end with the ability to stretch the field.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	8	13	9	6	9
Starters	1	5	5	2	2
Backups	1	0	2	2	7
Other teams	3	6	2	1	0
Out of NFL	3	2	0	1	0

Although they drafted quality players such as C Olin Kreutz, WR Marty Booker and LB Rosevelt Colvin in the third and fourth rounds, the Bears have not been as adept with earlier picks. LB Brian Urlacher (2000) is terrific, but he was the team's only first-round pick since '98 who was a full-time starter last year. RB Anthony Thomas (second round, 2001) faces a make-or-break season.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Marc Colombo, OT (10/5) Bulked up and won the starting job at left tackle. Will fill that role again this season.

3a. Roosevelt Williams, CB (13/2) Was drafted for his upside; team knew he would need time to develop. Could compete for a starting job.

3b. Terrence Metcalf, OT/G (4/0) Big, strong run blocker served as the backup left guard.

4. Alex Brown, DE (15/9) Came on late in rookie season. Will push Phillip Daniels for right end spot.

5a. Bobby Gray, S (3/0) Was active for just three games as a rookie; will compete for a backup job.

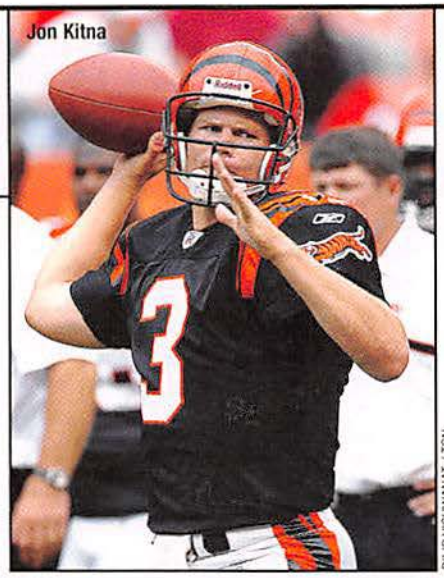
5b. Bryan Knight, LB (15/0) Edge rusher got more playing time as the season progressed.

6a. Adrian Peterson, RB (9/0) Returned kicks and got some action in the backfield late last season.

6b. Jamin Elliott, WR (1/0) Is raw but has speed. Will push for time as a No. 4 WR and return man.

6c. Bryan Fletcher, TE (0/0) Was not active for any games as a rookie; is No. 4 on the depth chart.

CINCINNATI BENGALS



DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. Cincinnati has one of the best groups of linebackers in the league and above-average pass rushing ends in Justin Smith and Reinard Wilson. But the inability of the interior linemen to hold ground against the run has forced the linebackers to make tackles further downfield, and the interior line's inability to collapse the pocket has forced the defensive ends to fight through more double-teams. Glen Steele exceeded expectations last year, but he lacks ideal bulk. Mario Monds missed all of last season recovering from a knee injury, and Oliver Gibson finished the season on injured reserve (Achilles' tendon). One option is for the Bengals to draft Penn State's Jimmy Kennedy with the first overall pick. Another option is to wait until the second round to take a prospect such as Texas A&M's Ty Warren or Clemson's Nick Eason.

2. Quarterback. Jon Kitna played well enough to return as the starter, and Akili Smith will have an opportunity to win the backup job. Gus Frerotte, an unrestricted free agent, won't return. Cincinnati needs to bring in a quarterback who will push Smith in training camp and who has the potential to eventually replace Kitna. The Bengals are hesitant to use their first-round pick on a quarterback after Smith failed to meet expectations. If they decide against drafting USC's Carson Palmer with the first pick, they could sign a free agent or draft Texas' Chris Simms in the second round or Miami's Ken Dorsey in the third.

3. Cornerback. Jeff Burris lacks the speed and change-of-direction skills to hold up in man coverage. Coach Marvin Lewis likes an attacking defense that can bring pressure from all over, and Burris must be replaced for Lewis' blitz packages to work. Depth is a concern, too. Drafting Kansas State's Terence Newman in the first round could solve the problem. If the team waits until the second round, Illinois' Eugene Wilson and Oregon State's Dennis Weathersby are options. Both would improve the nickel package right away and have the cover skills to eventually push Burris.

4. Center. Rich Braham, an unrestricted free agent, didn't play well last year, and there is little depth behind him. The team needs a center who can push Braham for the starting job in camp. The team could sign a free agent, but the Bengals still will need to improve the depth. Boston College's Dan Koppen or Miami's Brett Romberg, both of whom project as middle- to late-round picks, would provide adequate depth, and each has the potential to develop into a quality starter.

5. Defensive end. Vaughn Booker is expected to retire, and though Bernard Whittington played well late last season, he is an unrestricted free agent who might not return. Wilson is strictly a situational pass rusher. Cincinnati needs a power defensive end who excels against the run. Florida's Clint Mitchell and Alabama's Kindal Moorehead are projected late first-day picks who have the size and strength to push for playing time as situational run stuffers.

6. Wide receiver. The receivers ideal lack size and, with the exception of Chad Johnson, deep speed. No. 2 man Peter Warrick is explosive after the catch, but he is not much of a vertical threat. Cincinnati finished near the bottom of the league in touchdown receptions last year. The Bengals need a receiver with the speed to move Warrick inside in three-receiver sets and the size to be productive in the red zone. Though they could fill this need with a free agent, the Bengals might have interest in Michigan State's Charles Rogers with the first pick. Tennessee's Kelley Washington and Illinois' Brandon Lloyd excelled in the vertical passing game in college, and both are likely to be available in the second round.

7. Fullback. Starter Lorenzo Neal and backup Nicolas Luchey are unrestricted free agents. Cincinnati is working to re-sign Neal, and Luchey could return. Neal, 32, has problems blocking moving targets downfield, and Luchey has problems staying healthy. Late-round prospects J.P. Comella (Boston College) and James Lynch (Maryland) are powerful lead blockers with excellent potential who would benefit from playing behind Neal for a year.

The outlook

The Bengals haven't selected any later than fourth since 1998, so drafting this high is nothing new. What will be new is the involvement of Lewis. Conventional wisdom says the Bengals should draft Palmer and put an end to the quarterback woes that have haunted them since Boomer Esiason left town.

But the team is hinting it believes the choice would go to better use on a different position or as leverage to stockpile picks. If the Bengals strike a deal with, say, Carolina, they could draft a defensive tackle such as Kentucky's Dewayne Robertson with the ninth pick, then take Simms or Illinois' Wilson in the second round and maybe Florida's Mitchell in the third. Regardless, the Bengals are likely to focus on receiver, fullback and the secondary on Day 2.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	❑ Jon Kitna	LE	❑ Bernard Whittington
	❑ Akili Smith		❑ Reinard Wilson
FB	● Lorenzo Neal	LT	❑ Glen Steele
	❑ Nicolas Luchey		❑ Oliver Gibson
RB	● Corey Dillon	RT	■ Tony Williams
	■ Brandon Bennett		❑ Bernard Whittington
WR	■ Chad Johnson	RE	■ Justin Smith
	❑ T.J. Houshmandzadeh		❑ Reinard Wilson
WR	■ Peter Warrick	LLB	■ Steve Foley
	❑ Ron Dugans		❑ Canute Curtis
TE	■ Matt Schobel	MLB	■ Brian Simmons
	❑ Sean Brewer		❑ Adrian Ross
LT	■ Levi Jones	RLB	● Takeo Spikes
	❑ Reggie Coleman		❑ Riall Johnson
LG	■ Matt O'Dwyer	LCB	❑ Jeff Burris
	❑ Scott Rehberg		❑ Kevin Kaesviharn
C	■ Rich Braham	SS	■ JoJuan Armour
	❑ Brock Gutierrez		❑ Marquand Manuel
RG	■ Mike Goff	FS	❑ Cory Hall
	❑ Scott Rehberg		❑ Mark Roman
RT	● Willie Anderson	RCB	■ Artrell Hawkins
	■ Mike Goff		❑ Reggie Myles
K	■ Neil Rackers	P	❑ Nick Harris

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	9	9	7	7	6
Starters	6	1	2	2	3
Backups	0	2	3	5	2
Other teams	1	2	2	0	1
Out of NFL	2	4	0	0	0

QB Akili Smith (first round, 1999) remains a disappointment. Peter Warrick has become a consistent No. 2 receiver, but he has not produced like a No. 4 overall pick (2000) should. However, the decision to use three of the first four picks in '98 on linebackers worked out, and the last two first-round picks—DE Justin Smith and OT Levi Jones—made immediate impacts.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Levi Jones, OT (16/14) Supplanted former Pro Bowl player Richmond Webb as the starter. Will be protecting the blind side for years.

2. Lamont Thompson, S (13/0) He was a big disappointment and fell to No. 3 on the depth chart. Hasn't lived up to his physical abilities.

3. Matt Schobel, TE (16/10) Won the starting job and is looking to keep it this season.

4. Travis Dorsch, P/K (1/0) On the practice squad behind veteran Neil Rackers.

6. Marquand Manuel, S (15/8) Provides nice depth behind starter JoJuan Armour.

7. Joey Evans, DE (0/0) Cut; now a third-stringer with Seattle.

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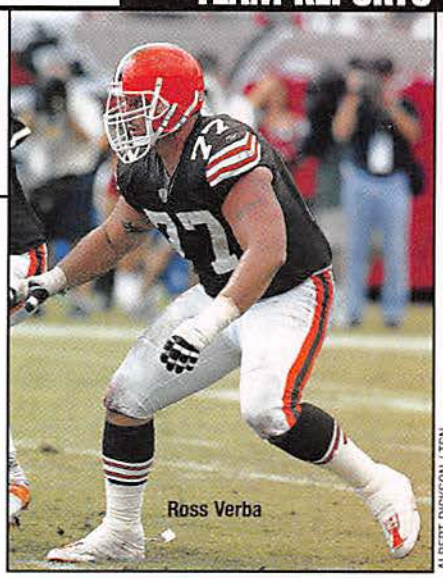
CLEVELAND BROWNS


Ross Verba

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

Team needs

1. Offensive tackle. Although Ross Verba is versatile enough to play anywhere in the line, he is a better fit at guard than at left tackle, and the Browns would like to move him back inside. In addition, right tackle Ryan Tucker lacks ideal pass-protection skills and is a better fit at guard. However, there isn't enough depth at tackle to move either player at this point, and at least one likely will remain at tackle in 2003. As a result, Cleveland will address this need with free agents and in the draft. Georgia's George Foster makes sense in the first round, and Florida State's Brett Williams should be available if the Browns wait until the second round.

2. Guard. Even if Verba or Tucker moves inside, this will remain a need. Verba isn't a dominant run blocker, and Shaun O'Hara lacks the bulk to consistently get movement at the point of attack. The team is high on developmental reserve Qasim Mitchell, who is raw but could push for playing time in 2003. Southern Mississippi's Torrin Tucker and Virginia Tech's Anthony Davis, both of whom were excellent interior run blockers in college, should be available in the middle rounds.

3. Cornerback. Daylon McCutcheon had a disappointing season and may be a better fit as a nickel back than as a starter. Though Corey Fuller, 31, was more consistent, he is beginning to show signs of age and could become a cap casualty. Nickel back Anthony Henry also failed to make as many big plays as he did in his rookie season and may be moved to safety. Ideally, Fuller will return, the Browns will draft a shutdown corner to complement him and McCutcheon will move to nickel back. Washington State's Marcus Trufant and Oklahoma's Andre Woolfolk are projected mid-first-round picks who have the man-to-man cover skills to push McCutcheon.

4. Tight end. The Browns gave H-back Steve Heiden a two-year contract extension after he had his most productive season catching the ball last year. But neither Heiden nor Mark Campbell is a consistent big-play threat. Cleveland needs a receiving tight end with the speed to stretch defenses and the burst to create separation in the red zone. Oklahoma's Trent Smith and Oregon's George Wrighster are projected middle-round selections who have the potential to make an immediate impact.

5. Defensive tackle. The interior run defense was porous last season. Gerard Warren is inconsistent, and Orpheus Roye, who could become a cap casualty, doesn't always play with leverage. In addition, there is little depth behind them, forcing both to stay on the field for too long. Cleveland probably will find a free agent to replace Roye if he doesn't return and then use a mid- to late-round pick on a massive situational run-stuffer such as Florida's Ian Scott.

6. Defensive end. Courtney Brown is scheduled to receive a considerable bonus this offseason, but after finishing two of his first three seasons on injured reserve (his latest knee injury is worse than initially anticipated), he could be released. Though Kenard Lang is strong against the run, he isn't a dominant edge rusher, and the Browns are expected to let strongside linebacker Jamir Miller, their best pass rusher, test the free-agent market. California's Tully Banta-Cain, Miami's Andrew Williams and Fresno State's Nick Burley have the potential to develop into every-down NFL players with improved technique.

7. Safety. All three free safeties on Cleveland's end-of-season roster are unrestricted free agents. Using their current players, the Browns could move Henry to free safety or start Michael James, who is promising but inexperienced. If Earl Little returns, he will likely be a backup. The Browns could try to fill the position with a free agent, but they also should use a late-round pick on a versatile player who can provide depth at both safety positions. Houston's Hanik Milligan and Texas A&M's Terrence Kiel are possibilities.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Kelly Holcomb	LE	■ Kenard Lang
	■ Tim Couch		❑ Tyrone Rogers
H-B	■ Steve Heiden	LT	■ Gerard Warren
	❑ R.J. Bowers		❑ Alvin McKinley
RB	■ William Green	RT	❑ Orpheus Roye
	❑ Jamel White		❑ Alvin McKinley
WR	■ Kevin Johnson	RE	■ Courtney Brown
	■ Andre Davis		❑ Tyrone Rogers
WR	■ Quincy Morgan	SLB	■ Jamir Miller
	■ Dennis Northcutt		❑ Darren Hambrick
TE	■ Mark Campbell	MLB	■ Earl Holmes
	❑ Darnell Sanders		❑ Brant Boyer
LT	■ Ross Verba	WLB	■ Dwayne Rudd
	❑ Joaquin Gonzalez		❑ Kevin Bentley
LG	❑ Qasim Mitchell	LCB	■ Corey Fuller
	❑ Paul Zukauskas		❑ Lewis Sanders
C	❑ Melvin Fowler	SS	■ Robert Griffith
	❑ Shaun O'Hara		❑ Chris Akins
RG	❑ Shaun O'Hara	FS	❑ Michael Jameson
	❑ Paul Zukauskas		❑ Chris Akins
RT	■ Ryan Tucker	RCB	■ Daylon McCutcheon
	❑ Joaquin Gonzalez		❑ Anthony Henry
K	■ Phil Dawson	P	■ Chris Gardocki

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Coach Butch Davis has had the final say on draft day since he took over in Cleveland, but for the first time in his three-year tenure, he will be running the Browns' war room without Dwight Clark, the former V.P/director of football operations. Davis loves speed, but he might be looking for more size than he did in his first two drafts because bulking up the offensive line is the No. 1 priority. With the 21st pick overall, don't expect the Browns to trade. Instead, they will wait to see which offensive linemen or cornerbacks are available when they pick. It won't be a shock if they take a big, physical tackle such as Foster in the first round, a cornerback in the second and another interior offensive lineman in the third. With three picks in the first two rounds on Day 2, look for them to go after a pass-catching tight end and to try to improve depth on the defensive line and at safety.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	NA	11	13	8	8
Starters	—	3	1	2	1
Backups	—	0	3	5	7
Other teams	—	6	3	0	0
Out of NFL	—	2	6	1	0

Cleveland has built a strong receivers unit with Kevin Johnson, Dennis Northcutt, Quincy Morgan and Andre Davis, all second-round picks since '99. After a slow start, 2002 first-round RB William Green finished strong last season. But former high first-round picks DE Courtney Brown (first overall, '00), DT Gerard Warren (third, '01) and QB Tim Couch (first, '99) have been disappointing.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. William Green, RB (16/10) Took over the starting job late and ended the season emphatically, showing great upside.

2. Andre Davis, WR (16/4) Logged significant time as a reserve; made big plays, scoring six TDs.

3. Melvin Fowler, C (1/1) If he adds bulk and continues to develop, he will be a starter in the league some day.

4a. Kevin Bentley, LB (12/0) Served primarily as Dwayne Rudd's backup on the weak side.

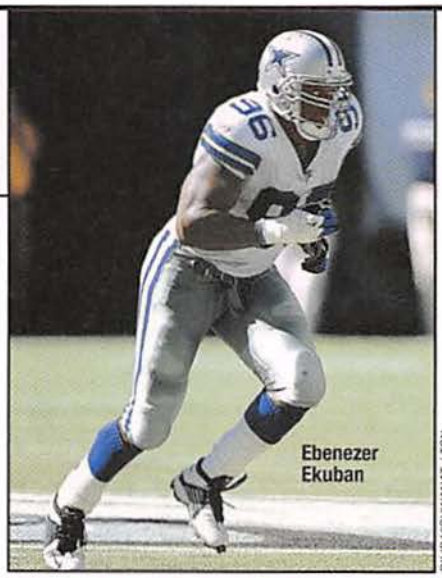
4b. Ben Taylor, LB (7/0) Currently a third-teamer at strongside linebacker.

4c. Darnell Sanders, TE (10/3) Showed potential as the team's No. 2 tight end. Could push for Mark Campbell's starting job.

5. Andra Davis, LB (16/0) A third-stringer in 2002; could compete for more playing time this season.

7. Joaquin Gonzalez, OT (9/0) Butch Davis liked him enough at Miami (Fla.) to draft him. Gonzalez is proving himself worthy of that confidence.

DALLAS COWBOYS


Ebenezer Ekuban

DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

Team needs

1. Cornerback. Defensive coordinator Mike Zimmer is expected to use more press coverage next year. Derek Ross and Pete Hunter are capable of excelling in this scheme, but both will be in their second year, and Hunter is very raw. If the Cowboys decide to draft highly rated defensive end Terrell Suggs instead of cornerback Terence Newman with the fifth overall pick, they may have to fill this need with a veteran free agent who would start opposite Ross. That would allow Hunter more time to develop.

2. Offensive tackle. The Cowboys will need two tackles unless Flozell Adams, who is a free agent and hasn't lived up to expectations, is re-signed. Even if Adams comes back, the team needs an effective run blocker who will add depth and eventually push for a starting job. Second- and third-round prospects such as Wisconsin's Ben Johnson, Florida State's Brett Williams and Illinois' Tony Pashos can do that.

3. Defensive end. Ebenezer Ekuban recorded one sack last year, which caused Greg Ellis to frequently face double-teams. Ellis has a variety of pass-rush moves but lacks ideal closing speed. The Cowboys should draft Arizona State's Suggs, if he's available, to replace Ekuban. Ekuban could play some on running downs while Suggs focuses more on rushing the passer until he's ready to start full time. Or the Cowboys could go with Texas' Cory Redding or Louisville's Dewayne White, who are projected to be second-round picks with the explosiveness to make an immediate impact as situational pass rushers.

4. Running back. Emmitt Smith, unwilling to be a backup, probably won't return, and Troy Hambrick probably will start. However, Hambrick never has been a full-time starter, and reserves Michael Wiley and Woodrow Dantzler are undersized. Colorado State's Cecil Sapp and Kentucky's Artose Pinner are big backs who excel between the tackles and could be productive in new coach Bill Parcells' power running game.

5. Defensive tackle. The Cowboys are expected to stay with the 4-3 scheme because they lack the personnel to shift to a 3-4. The team hopes to re-sign unrestricted free agent Brandon Noble but will sign a run-stuffing free agent if he leaves or use an early-round pick on a two-gap defensive tackle such as Texas A&M's Ty Warren. Reserve Michael Myers also is an unrestricted free agent, and the team must draft a one-gap defensive tackle such as Miami's Matt Walters or Temple's Dan Klecko in the middle to late rounds to replace him.

6. Guard. The Cowboys could sign a proven free agent to start opposite Larry Allen. They also could draft Florida State's Montrae Holland or Texas' Derrick Dockery, who both could play immediately, if one slips to the third round.

7. Tight end. Tony McGee could become a cap casualty. Backup Mike Lucky is an unrestricted free agent. Even if McGee does return, he is showing signs of aging. The Cowboys need a receiving tight end who can get open in the red zone—perhaps a free agent or Rutgers' L.J. Smith or Washington's Kevin Ware, both of whom could be around in later rounds.

8. Wide receiver. Raghib Ismail missed last season because of a neck injury and may not return. Darnay Scott won't be back. Ken-Yon Rambo is inconsistent. Dallas needs an explosive, consistent No. 3 receiver. Oregon's Keenan Howry and TCU's LaTarence Dunbar lack the size to play on the outside but are projected late-round picks who could fill this role.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	❑ Chad Hutchinson	LE	■ Greg Ellis
	❑ Quincy Carter		❑ Demetric Evans
FB	■ Jamar Martin	DT	● La'Roi Glover
	❑ Jason McKie		❑ John Nix
RB	❑ Troy Hambrick	NT	❑ Brandon Noble
	❑ Emmitt Smith		❑ John Nix
SE	■ Joey Galloway	RE	❑ Ebenezer Ekuban
	❑ Ken-Yon Rambo		❑ Demetric Evans
FL	■ Antonio Bryant	SLB	■ Kevin Hardy
	❑ Reggie Swinton		❑ Markus Steele
TE	❑ Tony McGee	MLB	■ Dat Nguyen
	❑ Mike Lucky		❑ Markus Steele
LT	■ Flozell Adams	WLB	● Dexter Coakley
	❑ Javier Collins		❑ Louis Mackey
LG	■ Larry Allen	LCB	■ Derek Ross
	❑ Ross Tucker		❑ Pete Hunter
C	■ Andre Gurode	SS	❑ Tony Dixon
	❑ Tyson Walter		❑ Lynn Scott
RG	❑ Matt Lehr	FS	● Roy Williams
	❑ Ross Tucker		❑ Keith Davis
RT	❑ Javier Collins	RCB	❑ Mario Edwards
	❑ Tyson Walter		❑ Pete Hunter
K	❑ Billy Cundiff	P	❑ Filip Filipovic

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Probably the biggest similarity between Parcells and owner Jerry Jones is their willingness, even eagerness, to make deals on draft day. With the fifth overall pick, they will certainly have the opportunity to do so. For the first time in three years, the Cowboys' draft needs are clear: They must bring in a defensive end to improve their pass rush, a cornerback who can legitimately contend for playing time as a rookie, an offensive tackle with the potential to develop into a starter and a running back with starting potential.

If the team keeps its first-round pick, the most logical choice is Suggs, if he's available. Suggs could step in right away as a starter at right end and provide a much-needed upgrade. Newman, the Kansas State corner, is the only other player who makes sense. In either case, expect the Cowboys to draft a defensive end and a cornerback with their first two picks, then switch their focus to running back and offensive tackle in the third and fourth rounds. The team has an extra pick from the Chargers in the seventh round, and it likely will address depth issues at defensive tackle, the interior offensive line, tight end and wide receiver in the final three rounds.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY D+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	9	8	5	9	9
Starters	2	3	1	1	6
Backups	1	2	2	7	3
Other teams	4	2	1	1	0
Out of NFL	2	1	1	0	0

Although the Cowboys had a strong 2002 draft, they have not done well in recent years. DT Ebenezer Ekuban (first round, 1999) has been a disappointment, 2001 second-round QB Quincy Carter lost his starting job and 2000 second-round CB Dwayne Goodrich's career may be over because of off-the-field problems. An inability to find quality players in later rounds has hurt depth.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Roy Williams, S (16/16) Lived up to hype. Made plays all over the field against the run. Improved in coverage. Could play free or strong safety.

2a. Andre Gurode, G (14/14) Won starting left guard job. Crushing run blocker. Needs to get into better shape and do a better job in pass protection.

2b. Antonio Bryant, WR (16/15) Rocket Ismail's injury forced him into starting job right away.

3. Derek Ross, CB (14/9) Is team's best corner. Has impressive ball skills. Excels in press coverage.

4. Jamar Martin, FB (0/0) Tore ACL in training camp and missed the season. Currently the No. 3 fullback.

5. Pete Hunter, CB (11/2) Big CB showed flashes. Must improve instincts and recognition skills.

6a. Tyson Walter, C (10/8) Moved to center and became starter. Could thrive in team's new offense.

6b. DeVeren Johnson, WR (0/0) Huge receiver is long-term prospect. Must fight for roster spot.

6c. Bob Slowikowski, TE (0/0) Injured last year. Could push for a reserve role this season.

DENVER BRONCOS

Team needs

1. Quarterback. It's unlikely Brian Griese will be on the roster in 2003, and it's unknown whether Steve Beuerlein will retire. If Beuerlein returns, he is expected to start, which would allow a draft pick to develop for at least a year. If he doesn't, the team should sign a veteran free agent who can start while serving as a mentor to the rookie backup. Thus, the Broncos could afford to wait until the second round to select a player such as Texas' Chris Simms or Louisville's Dave Ragone.

2. Defensive end. The team lacks an explosive pass rusher to complement left end Trevor Pryce. Kavika Pittman is expected to become a cap casualty, leaving Bertrand Berry as the likely starter opposite Pryce. Berry has flashed potential as a situational pass rusher but is inconsistent. Reggie Hayward played in nine games last season and has potential, but he tends to wear down in games. Denver needs to add a dominant pass rusher who can draw attention from Pryce. Miami's Jerome McDougle could be an answer in the first round. And Florida State's Alonzo Jackson and Wake Forest's Calvin Pace are projected third-rounders who would be good fits.

3. Cornerback. Deltha O'Neal should return as a starter, but Tyrone Poole—who replaced O'Neal in the lineup for a couple of games late last season—was an unrestricted free agent. The Broncos must add a nickel back with the ball skills to make big plays and the cover skills to eventually push Denard Walker for the other starting job. The team wants to be more aggressive in coverage next season; drafting Oklahoma's Andre Woolfolk in the first round could be a solution. SMU's Kevin Garrett and UCLA's Ricky Manning, a pair of third-round prospects, have the man-to-man cover skills to make an immediate impact, but that most likely would be in the nickel package.

4. Offensive tackle. The Broncos need to improve their pass protection. Left tackle Ephraim Salaam remains inconsistent, and backup Blake Brockermeyer is expected to be a cap casualty. The team could fill this need in the free-agent market, but Georgia's Jon Stinchcomb has great pass-blocking skills and should be available in the second round. Because Matt Lepsis hasn't been as productive as expected, the Broncos also might use a late-round pick on a developmental right tackle such as San Jose State's Tim Provost or BYU's Dustin Rykert.

5. Outside linebacker. John Mobley struggled in his first season on the strong side, and there is little depth behind Mobley and weaksidce linebacker Ian Gold. Mobley will return as the starter, so the team must find a backup who has the size and strength to play on the strong side. Fresno State's Sam Williams and Louisville's Chad Lee are late-round prospects who flash the potential to become quality reserves on the strong side. Both also could make an impact on special teams.

6. Defensive tackle. The Broncos' linebacker unit is built on speed and does an excellent job of flowing to the football, but it is undersized. As a result, it needs defensive tackles who take up space and blockers. But Chester McGlockton was expected to become a cap casualty, and Montae Reagor was an unrestricted free agent. The team is high on backup Monsanto Pope, but he might not be ready to step into the starting lineup. Florida's Ian Scott, USC's Bernard Riley and Wake Forest's Montique Sharpe are mid-to-late round prospects who have the size and power to contribute as situational run stuffers.

7. Safety. Free safety Izell Reese is an unrestricted free agent, and the team is considering moving Sam Brandon over from strong safety. But that would leave little depth behind Kenoy Kennedy, who did not have a great 2002. So, the Broncos need to add a late-round pick or a free agent who can provide adequate depth and play both safety positions. Louisville's Anthony Floyd, Texas A&M's Terrence Kiel and Michigan State's Thomas Wright could fill the role.

The outlook

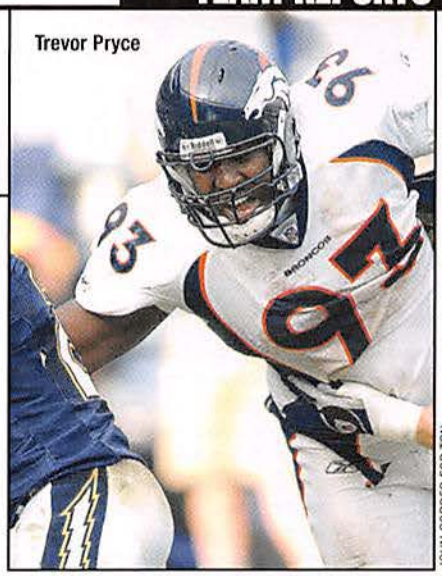
With salary-cap purgatory looming, coach Mike Shanahan and his personnel staff need to be as effective in this draft as they were in last year's. Unless an unexpected talent from another position falls to them in the first round, the Broncos likely will draft a defensive end, a cornerback or a quarterback with their to pick pick (20th overall).

And because the team already has resigned kicker Jason Elam, its primary goals on the second day of the draft will be to find a backup outside linebacker, a two-gap defensive tackle who can contribute on running downs, a backup right offensive tackle and a versatile safety with some developmental potential.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	❑ Steve Beuerlein	LE	● Trevor Pryce
	■ Brian Griese		■ Keith Washington
FB	■ Mike Anderson	LT	❑ Montae Reagor
	❑ Reuben Droughns		■ Lional Dalton
RB	● Clinton Portis	RT	■ Chester McGlockton
	■ Mike Anderson		❑ Monsanto Pope
WR	■ Rod Smith	RE	❑ Bertrand Berry
	■ Ashley Lelie		❑ Kavika Pittman
WR	■ Ed McCaffrey	WLB	■ Ian Gold
	❑ Scottie Montgomery		❑ Donnie Spragan
TE	■ Shannon Sharpe	MLB	■ Al Wilson
	❑ Dwayne Carswell		❑ Keith Burns
LT	■ Ephraim Salaam	SLB	■ John Mobley
	❑ Blake Brockermeyer		❑ Donnie Spragan
LG	❑ Ben Hamilton	LCB	■ Deltha O'Neal
	❑ Steve Herndon		❑ Tyrone Poole
C	● Tom Nalen	SS	■ Kenoy Kennedy
	❑ Ben Hamilton		❑ Sam Brandon
RG	● Dan Neil	FS	❑ Sam Brandon
	❑ Lennie Friedman		❑ Izell Reese
RT	■ Matt Lepsis	RCB	■ Denard Walker
	❑ Cooper Carlisle		❑ Lenny Walls
K	■ Jason Elam	P	❑ Micah Knorr

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player


Trevor Pryce

JOHN CORDES FOR TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	12	10	6	8
Starters	1	1	3	0	1
Backups	0	3	4	3	7
Other teams	3	5	0	2	0
Out of NFL	3	3	3	1	0

CB Willie Middlebrooks (first round, 2001) has not progressed as expected, and 1998 first-round WR Marcus Nash is no longer in the league. But the Broncos have had success finding productive players such as RBs Olandis Gary and Mike Anderson later in the draft. High-round LBs Al Wilson ('99) and Ian Gold ('00) are solid. The '02 class, led by RB Clinton Portis, was outstanding.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Ashley Lelie, WR (16/1) A bit inconsistent as a rookie, he should push for a starting job in 2003.

2. Clinton Portis, RB (16/12) Steal of the draft at No. 51 overall. Put up staggering numbers and won offensive Rookie of the Year acclaim.

3. Dorsett Davis, DT (0/0) Somewhat of a disappointment. Currently the team's No. 5 tackle.

4. Sam Brandon, S (16/2) A big hitter who must develop better cover skills, he could start at free safety if Izell Reese doesn't return.

5. Herb Haygood, WR (4/0) Finished the season on I.R. and must stay healthy to make the team. A better return specialist than receiver.

6. Jeb Putzier, TE (3/1) Buried as team's fourth tight end. Developmental prospect with good size.

7a. Chris Young, S (0/0) Played both cornerback and safety in college but currently is the team's No. 3 strong safety. Needs to play better in space.

7b. Monsanto Pope, DT (14/1) Added bulk and beat out third-round pick Davis for playing time.

DETROIT LIONS

Team needs

1. Wide receiver. With Az-Zahir Hakim recovering from a hip injury, Germane Crowell likely to be a cap casualty and Bill Schroeder failing to make a significant impact, the team must add a playmaker. Michigan State's Charles Rogers is a consistent downfield threat who would create single-coverage opportunities for Schroeder and allow the undersized Hakim to become the slot receiver. If the Lions go in a different direction with their top pick, they could get a quality receiver such as Florida State's Anquan Boldin, Penn State's Bryant Johnson or Illinois' Brandon Lloyd with the first pick in the second round.

2. Cornerback. The retirement of Todd Lyght, coupled with veterans Eric Davis and Donovan Greer becoming unrestricted free agents, leaves the secondary thin. Andre Goodman will push for a starting job, but Chris Cash is a better fit as a nickel back. Each is entering his second year. Although the team would like to fill this need with an experienced, high-profile free agent, there aren't many quality corners available. The team might be forced to draft a shutdown corner such as Kansas State's Terence Newman with the second overall pick or trade down to a lower pick in the first round and try to draft Washington State's Marcus Trufant.

3. Running back. James Stewart has averaged 4.6 yards a carry the past two seasons, but he started just 19 games in that span. He could be released if he doesn't restructure his contract. Even if Stewart remains, he lacks big-play ability. And there is little depth behind him. Virginia Tech's Lee Suggs, Oregon's Onterrio Smith and USC's Justin Fargas are projected early-round selections who are capable of pushing Stewart for playing time and stepping in if Stewart gets hurt.

4. Outside linebacker. Donte Curry did an adequate job last year, but he lacks the size and recognition skills to start on the strong side. Backup Clint Kriewaldt is an unrestricted free agent who probably won't return. Detroit needs to add a linebacker who has the strength to hold his ground against the run and isn't a liability in coverage. Oregon State's Nick Barnett, Virginia's Angelo Crowell, Michigan's Victor Hobson and Florida's Mike Nattiel are capable of pushing Curry for the starting job, and at least one—if not all—of those players should be around when the Lions pick in the third round.

5. Middle linebacker. It is unknown whether unrestricted free agent Chris Claiborne will return. If he does, this won't be a pressing need. However, there isn't a player on the roster ready to replace Claiborne should he leave. The Lions likely would sign a proven free agent to replace Claiborne, but they would be wise to use a late-round pick on a developmental player. Tennessee's Keyon Whiteside and Virginia's Merrill Robertson have the potential to develop into excellent reserves.

6. Guard. Ray Brown is a free agent nearing the end of his career. If he leaves, backup center Eric Beverly would replace him at right guard. Tony Semple, the other starting guard, is not a dominant run blocker, and the Lions had problems picking up first downs in short-yardage situations last year. Detroit needs to draft a guard who can push for playing time and eventually become a starter. Virginia Tech's Anthony Davis and Texas A&M's Taylor Whitley are early Day 2 prospects who have the talent to fill this need.

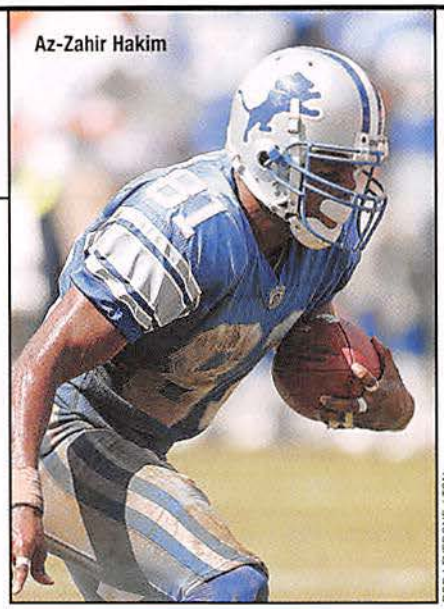
7. Defensive end. The team would like Robert Porcher to return, and this won't be a need if he does. But he will have to restructure his contract. If Porcher is released, James Hall will replace him as the starter on the left side, with Kalimba Edwards starting on the other side. Although Hall is adequate against the run, he won't draw attention away from Edwards as a pass rusher. If Porcher becomes a cap casualty, the Lions will need to add a situational pass rusher. Miami's Andrew Williams, Cincinnati's Antwan Peek, Fresno State's Nick Burley and Clemson's Bryant McNeal are possibilities in the middle-to-late rounds.

8. Strong safety. Corey Harris is strong against the run, but he never has had ideal cover skills and has lost a step. Backup Bracey Walker is an unrestricted free agent who probably won't be back. The Lions would be smart to start preparing a replacement for Harris. Louisville's Curry Burns and Boise State's Quintin Mikell should be available late.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Joey Harrington	LE	■ Robert Porcher
	■ Mike McMahon		❑ Jared DeVries
FB	■ Cory Schlesinger	LT	■ Kelvin Pritchett
	❑ Stephen Trejo		❑ James Hall
RB	■ James Stewart	RT	■ Shaun Rogers
	❑ Rafael Cooper		❑ Travis Kirschke
WR	❑ Scotty Anderson	RE	■ Kalimba Edwards
	❑ Az-Zahir Hakim		❑ James Hall
WR	❑ Bill Schroeder	WLB	❑ Barrett Green
	❑ Larry Foster		❑ Jeff Gooch
TE	❑ Mikhael Ricks	MLB	■ Chris Claiborne
	❑ John Owens		❑ Josh Thornhill
LT	■ Jeff Backus	SLB	❑ Donte Curry
	❑ Matt Joyce		❑ Clint Kriewaldt
LG	❑ Tony Semple	LCB	❑ Chris Cash
	❑ Tyrone Hopson		❑ Jimmy Wyrick
C	■ Dominic Raiola	SS	■ Corey Harris
	■ Eric Beverly		❑ Eric Davis
RG	■ Ray Brown	FS	■ Brian Walker
	❑ Tyrone Hopson		❑ Lamar Campbell
RT	■ Stockar McDougle	RCB	❑ Andre Goodman
	❑ Matt Joyce		❑ Eric Davis
K	■ Jason Hanson	P	■ John Jett

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player


Az-Zahir Hakim

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	5	7	6	6	9
Starters	0	1	2	4	4
Backups	1	2	0	1	5
Other teams	3	2	3	1	0
Out of NFL	1	2	1	0	0

Since 2000, the Lions have drafted three starters for their improving offensive line. WR Germane Crowell, a 1998 second-rounder, has yet to regain the explosiveness he showed before injuring his knee, and WR Scotty Anderson, a 2001 fifth-rounder, remains inconsistent. Though four 2002 picks finished last season as starters, all four were forced into the lineup prematurely, so the jury still is out.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Joey Harrington, QB (14/12) Heart condition gave team a scare. Needs experience, time to develop and more weapons around him.

2. Kalimba Edwards, DE (16/4) Showed a lot of upside as a speed rusher. Needs to become stronger vs. the run, but the job is his to lose.

3. Andre Goodman, CB (14/6) Was the most consistent cornerback on the roster late in the season.

4. John Taylor, DE (0/0) A 'tweener. Third on the depth chart at left end.

5. John Owens, TE (15/8) Better blocker than receiver. Likely will remain No. 2 tight end in 2003.

6. Chris Cash, CB (16/12) Part of rebuilding plan on defense. Must be more consistent in coverage.

7a. Luke Staley, RB (0/0) Must get healthy to win a roster spot.

7b. Matt Murphy, TE (3/0) Has limited upside. Currently is the No. 3 tight end.

7c. Victor Rogers, OT (0/0) Strong run blocker should be a reliable backup behind Jeff Backus.

The outlook

Drafting Rogers with the second overall pick makes the most sense. Rogers would be a terrific fit in new coach Steve Mariucci's offense, and he would provide second-year quarterback Joey Harrington with his first legitimate weapon. With other picks, the Lions could take the best available running back, cornerback or outside linebacker. One other move that could make sense would be to trade down to acquire extra picks.

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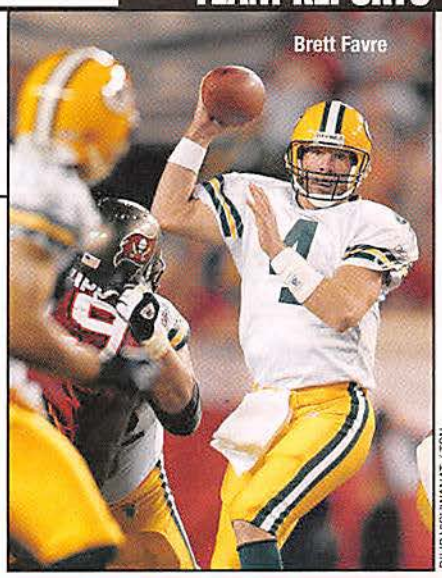
GREEN BAY PACKERS


Brett Favre

DILIP VISHWANAT / TSN

Team needs

1. Middle linebacker. With no depth and disappointing Hardy Nickerson not expected to return, the team may have to address this need in the draft and with a free agent. The team must add a linebacker who shows good range against both the run and the pass. Kansas State's Terry Pierce and Pittsburgh's Gerald Hayes are capable of immediate playing time, and one of them should be available at the 29th pick. If Green Bay chooses to sign a veteran and draft a backup, Georgia's Tony Gilbert and Ohio State's Matt Wilhelm are middle-round possibilities who could provide depth.

2. Defensive end. Vonnie Holliday is an unrestricted free agent who may not return, and a season-ending triceps injury may affect Joe Johnson's play. Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila could start on the right side with Johnson moving to the left, but Gbaja-Biamila is a better fit as a situational pass rusher, and depth must improve behind Johnson. The team needs an end who has the power to anchor against the run and is relentless rushing the passer. Penn State's Michael Haynes and Nebraska's Chris Kelsay are late-first round prospects, and Texas' Cory Redding and Florida's Clint Mitchell are possible second-round picks who have the potential to push for a starting job.

3. Defensive tackle. Cletidus Hunt likely will return, but Gilbert Brown has durability concerns and may not. Backup Rod Walker has the size to replace Brown but wears down quickly and doesn't play with leverage when he's tired. If Brown doesn't return, the team will need a situational run stuffer who can keep Walker fresh. Middle-round prospects Matt Leonard of Stanford or Colin Cole of Iowa would be a good fit. Hunt had a strong season and was productive rushing the passer. If Hunt leaves, the team might try to replace him with a free agent or draft a one-gap tackle such as Oregon State's Eric Manning or Penn State's Anthony Adams late in the first day.

4. Quarterback. Although Brett Favre will return, backup Doug Pederson is an unrestricted free agent and probably won't. It is critical that the team start grooming Favre's replacement. The Packers are happy with the progress of Craig Nall, and he could win the backup job in camp. But he must be pushed, and Zak Kustok has been signed as competition. The team also could add a veteran, but Washington State's Jason Gesser, Eastern Illinois' Tony Romo and Portland State's Juston Wood are possible Day 2 quarterbacks who have better potential than Nall and eventually could excel in this scheme. If Florida's Rex Grossman is around at No. 29, he'll be hard to pass up.

5. Outside linebacker. Nate Wayne had a disappointing season and could lose his starting job to Torrance Marshall. Marshall, who has been a bust at middle linebacker, has an excellent combination of size and speed but lacks recognition skills. On the other side, depth must improve behind Na'il Diggs, and Vanderbilt's Hunter Hillenmeyer and Texas A&M's Jarrod Penright are middle-round picks who could provide help while contributing on special teams.

6. Cornerback. Tyrone Williams is expected to be released unless his contract is restructured, and backups Bryant Westbrook and Tod McBride are unrestricted free agents. The team was impressed with Westbrook's play last season and will work to sign him or another free agent if Williams leaves. The Packers also need to draft a corner to push Bhawoh Jue for the nickel back job, and either Pittsburgh's Torrie Cox or Michigan State's Cedric Henry would fit.

7. Tight end. Bubba Franks is one of the best red zone targets in the league but isn't a big-play threat. Reserve David Martin regressed last year after a promising rookie season, and Tyrone Davis is an unrestricted free agent who probably won't return. The team should use a late-round pick on a developmental receiving tight end. Rutgers' L.J. Smith and Eastern Washington's Dan Curley have the speed to stretch opposing defenses and eventually could complement Franks.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	● Brett Favre	LE	■ Joe Johnson
	❑ Doug Pederson		❑ Aaron Kampman
FB	■ William Henderson	LT	■ Gilbert Brown
	❑ Tony Carter		❑ Rod Walker
RB	● Ahman Green	RT	■ Cletidus Hunt
	❑ Najeh Davenport		❑ Billy Lyon
WR	● Donald Driver	RE	■ Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila
	❑ Robert Ferguson		❑ Jamal Reynolds
WR	■ Terry Glenn	SLB	■ Na'il Diggs
	❑ Javon Walker		❑ Paris Lenon
TE	■ Bubba Franks	MLB	❑ Paris Lenon
	❑ Tyrone Davis		❑ Torrance Marshall
LT	■ Chad Clifton	WLB	■ Nate Wayne
	❑ Kevin Barry		❑ Torrance Marshall
LG	■ Mike Wahle	LCB	■ Mike McKenzie
	❑ Bill Ferrario		❑ Bryant Westbrook
C	■ Mike Flanagan	SS	■ Marques Anderson
	❑ Frank Winters		❑ Antuan Edwards
RG	■ Marco Rivera	FS	● Darren Sharper
	❑ Bill Ferrario		❑ Matt Bowen
RT	■ Mark Tauscher	RCB	❑ Bryant Westbrook
	■ Earl Dotson		❑ Jacoby Shepherd
K	■ Ryan Longwell	P	■ Josh Bidwell

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	12	13	6	6
Starters	1	4	5	0	1
Backups	0	1	1	6	4
Other teams	3	2	3	0	1
Out of NFL	3	5	4	0	0

The Packers have strengthened their secondary with 1999 third-round CB Mike McKenzie and 2002 third-round SS Marques Anderson. They also did an excellent job of picking up DE Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila, OT Mark Tauscher and WR Donald Driver in later rounds. But two former first-rounders, DE Jamal Reynolds and CB Antuan Edwards, have yet to make substantial impacts.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Javon Walker, WR (15/2) Wasn't the instant answer the Pack hoped for but has a lot of upside and explosiveness and will push for the No. 2 spot.

3. Marques Anderson, SS (14/11) Played well enough against the run to become the starter and improved his coverage skills on the job.

4. Najeh Davenport, RB (8/0) A 'tweener back, he moved to running back, where he never will be a premier guy, but he catches the ball well and is a good change of pace backup for Ahman Green.

5a. Aaron Kampman, DE (12/6) Backed up Vonnie Holiday at left end but also played inside. Started six games; his versatility was a big help on an injury-plagued defense.

5b. Craig Nall, QB (0/0) The team's No. 3 quarterback, he probably isn't Brett Favre's successor, but over time he could become a solid No. 2.

6. Mike Houghton, G (1/0*) No longer with Green Bay. Picked up by Buffalo and moved to left tackle.

**Games played with another NFL team*

The outlook

The team must consider drafting a quarterback on Day 1. But if Grossman is gone, the team is reaching if it takes any other quarterback with its first pick. It would be a better idea to draft a top middle linebacker such as Pierce or Hayes or a top defensive end such as Haynes or Kelsay. Because of the Terry Glenn trade, the team has no fourth-round pick, so it doesn't have much room to stray from its position needs on Day 1. The team could draft a solid defensive end such as Redding or Mitchell in the second round, then a quarterback such as Miami's Ken Dorsey with its last pick until the fifth round. With only a few picks late in Day 2, the team will look to find a linebacker, cornerback and tight end.

HOUSTON TEXANS

Jonathan Wells

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

Team needs

1. Running back. Houston hoped that James Allen would be productive enough last season to allow Jonathan Wells to develop for a year. It didn't happen. Allen lost the starting job after a slow start, and Wells appeared hesitant when he played. With Allen a free agent and not expected to return; Houston needs a back with the speed to complement Wells' inside power and push him in training camp. Virginia Tech's Lee Suggs and Oregon's Onterrio Smith are projected early-round picks who would be good fits.

2. Offensive tackle. The Texans must prepare for the possibility that Tony Boselli may not play in 2003. Chester Pitts could start at left tackle again, but Houston would like to move him to guard. The Texans could sign a free agent or trade down and select a premier left tackle such as Utah's Jordan Gross or even Iowa guard/tackle Eric Steinbach later in the first round. Houston would be wise to use a late-round pick on a developmental tackle such as Florida State's Todd Williams or Arkansas State's Garry Johnson.

3. Wide receiver. Jermaine Lewis was released after a disappointing 2002. Although Jabar Gaffney runs excellent routes and has reliable hands, his lack of speed allows teams to limit Corey Bradford's production downfield. Adding a receiver with deep speed would create more single-coverage matchups for Bradford and make Gaffney the No. 3 receiver he should be. Unless Charles Rogers slips to the third overall pick, Houston could select a vertical receiver in the second or third round.

4. Defensive end. Ends in the 3-4 must be able to rush the passer as well as anchor against the run. Jerry DeLoach played better than expected last year, but he was a nonfactor rushing the passer. Houston needs an end who has the speed and change-of-direction skills to replace DeLoach on passing downs. College defensive tackles often make good ends in a 3-4, which is why drafting Texas A&M's Ty Warren or Florida's Ian Scott would make a lot of sense in the second or third round.

5. Inside linebacker. Jay Foreman is an unrestricted free agent, and there isn't a player on the roster ready to replace him. Though Houston is working on re-signing Foreman and probably would sign a free agent should he leave, it needs to improve the depth at this position. Mississippi State's Mario Haggan, Georgia's Tony Gilbert and Ohio State's Matt Wilhelm are projected middle-round selections who would provide adequate depth while contributing on special teams.

6. Safety. Houston is interested in re-signing free-agent strong safety Eric Brown and has signed Travares Tillman, who has NFL starting experience. Ramon Walker likely will push Matt Stevens for the starting free safety job or replace Brown if he leaves, but all three are liabilities in coverage. Virginia Tech's Willie Pile, Louisville's Anthony Floyd and Michigan State's Thomas Wright are projected mid-round picks who could help the Texans.

7. Cornerback. In Aaron Glenn and Marcus Coleman, Houston has a good starting tandem, but it's unlikely backups and unrestricted free agents Kenny Wright and Jason Simmons will both be back. DeMarcus Faggins isn't ready to challenge for the nickel back role, so Houston will need to add a cornerback who can push for playing time. SMU's Kevin Garrett, Texas' Roderick Babers and Colorado's Donald Strickland have excellent cover skills, and one of them could slip to the second day of the draft.

8. Outside linebacker. Houston needs to improve its pass rush, so adding a developmental linebacker who shows good initial burst and closing speed is vital. Tennessee's Eddie Moore, Ohio State's Cie Grant and Clemson's Rodney Thomas fit the mold.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ David Carr	LE	● Gary Walker
	❑ Tony Banks		❑ Corey Sears
FB	■ Jarrod Baxter	DT	■ Seth Payne
	❑ Moran Norris		❑ Charles Hill
RB	❑ Jonathan Wells	RE	❑ Jerry DeLoach
	❑ James Allen		❑ Shawn Worthen
WR	■ Corey Bradford	LOLB	■ Kailee Wong
	❑ JaJuan Dawson		❑ Erik Flowers
WR	■ Jabar Gaffney	LILB	■ Jay Foreman
	❑ Avion Black		❑ Troy Evans
TE	■ Billy Miller	RILB	■ Jamie Sharper
	❑ Jabari Holloway		❑ Jimmy McClain
LT	■ Tony Boselli	ROLB	■ Jeff Posey
	❑ Jimmy Herndon		■ Keith Mitchell
LG	■ Chester Pitts	LCB	● Aaron Glenn
	❑ Cameron Spikes		❑ Kenny Wright
C	■ Steve McKinney	SS	❑ Eric Brown
	❑ Milford Brown		❑ Ramon Walker
RG	❑ Fred Weary	FS	❑ Matt Stevens
	❑ Ryan Schau		❑ Kevin Williams
RT	■ Ryan Young	RCB	■ Marcus Coleman
	❑ Tarlos Thomas		❑ Jason Simmons
K	❑ Kris Brown	P	❑ Chad Stanley

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

The Texans want to stockpile as many Day 1 picks as possible by trading the third overall choice. But if they don't get an offer they like, they have some nice options at No. 3. Assuming USC quarterback Carson Palmer and Michigan State's Rogers are gone, they can either take the next-best wide receiver (Miami's Andre Johnson), the best offensive tackle (Gross) or the best defensive lineman (Penn State's Jimmy Kennedy). They would like to trade down and get an extra second-round pick, which would give them one first, two seconds and three thirds. With six picks, they could exit Day 1 with an offensive lineman such as Steinbach in the first round and a running back such as Smith and a defensive lineman such as Warren in the second round. They also could add a wideout such as Florida State's Talman Gardner, a corner such as Garrett and another player in the third round. Depending on how Day 1 shakes out, the Texans could focus on improving their depth in the defensive line and at linebacker on Day 2.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY A-

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	NA	NA	NA	NA	12
Starters	—	—	—	—	6
Backups	—	—	—	—	4
Other teams	—	—	—	—	0
Out of NFL	—	—	—	—	2

Houston failed to draft an impact running back and still needs a playmaker at receiver, but it did a sound job of building depth in the secondary and defensive line in its first draft. Injuries forced the Texans to start both of the offensive linemen they drafted (Chester Pitts and Fred Weary), and both improved as the season progressed. Six of Houston's 12 2002 picks ended last season as a starter.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. David Carr, QB (16/16) Made few mental mistakes and showed he could take punishment (76 sacks).

2a. Jabar Gaffney, WR (16/14) Starter who must improve in 2003.

2b. Chester Pitts, OT (16/16) Started every game after Tony Boselli was injured.

3a. Fred Weary, G (16/12) Ended the season starting at right guard and likely will stay there.

3b. Charles Hill, DT (16/0) Backs up Seth Payne at nose tackle. Fits well protecting LBs in the 3-4.

4. Jonathan Wells, RB (16/11) Led the team in rushing but at 2.8 ypc is no long-term answer.

5a. Jarrod Baxter, FB (16/10) Started at fullback in 2002 and should keep the spot.

5b. Ramon Walker, S (9/1) Backed up Eric Brown at strong safety.

6a. DeMarcus Faggins, CB (2/0) Undersized corner currently is a third-stringer.

6b. Howard Green, DT (1/0) Moved from offense to defensive tackle after brief period with Ravens.

7a. Greg White, DE (0/0) Cut; now with Titans.

7b. Ahmad Miller, DE (0/0) Cut; now with Giants.

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

Team needs

1. Cornerback. Walt Harris has the range to maintain his starting job in the Colts' cover 2 scheme, but fellow starter David Macklin made too many mistakes last season. Macklin lacks the size to start on the outside. The Colts finished near the bottom of the league in interceptions, and they need a corner who has the ball skills to provide some big plays. Oregon State's Dennis Weathersby and Texas A&M's Sammy Davis would be good fits in this scheme, and at least one of them should be available when the Colts pick late in the second round. The Colts could move Macklin to the nickel back role, which suits his skills.

2. Defensive tackle. Indianapolis wants to re-sign unrestricted free agent Brad Scioli. Larry Tripplett had a strong rookie season but doesn't play like a 300-pounder. The inability of the line to hold its ground last season forced the linebackers to make tackles downfield. The Colts must add a two-gap run stuffer who can anchor against double-teams and take up blockers at the line of scrimmage. Georgia's Johnathan Sullivan is a great fit if he is available when Indianapolis picks 24th overall.

3. Safety. Cory Bird and Idrees Bashir will return this season, but Bird's season-ending hip injury in 2002 could affect his play at strong safety. Bashir has durability issues, too. The Colts are excited about reserve David Gibson, but he and backup free safety Jason Doering give up too many big plays in pass coverage. The Colts need a safety who has the range to contribute on passing downs and the versatility to provide quality depth at either safety spot. This need could be filled by signing a free agent or with a middle-round pick such as N.C. State's Terrence Holt, Tennessee's Julian Battle or Utah's Antwoine Sanders.

4. Tight end. Marcus Pollard is versatile enough to line up in several spots, and he is an excellent red zone target. However, considering his age (31), the Colts must start grooming a replacement. Backup Joe Dean Davenport is a good blocker but offers little as a receiver. The Colts need a tight end who has the speed to stretch defenses. Rutgers' L.J. Smith and Eastern Washington's Dan Curley offer the downfield burst and explosiveness the Colts must find with a late-round pick.

5. Guard. The Colts had trouble last season converting for short yardage on third downs. Part of the problem was that running back Edgerrin James was not completely recovered from his 2001 knee surgery. The rest of the problem was the run blocking. Left guard Rick DeMulling lacks the lower body strength to get movement at the line of scrimmage. He often gets pushed back at the point of attack. The Colts need an upgrade because DeMulling, who can play center or guard, is more valuable as a reserve. One option is signing a free agent. The other option is using a mid-round pick on a powerful run blocker such as Torrin Tucker of Southern Mississippi or a later pick on Georgia's Alex Jackson or Stanford's Greg Schindler.

6. Outside linebacker. Mike Peterson might be too expensive for the Colts to keep, which would leave the job to David Thornton. Thornton has the athletic ability to develop into a productive starter, but he lacks experience and is the team's top backup linebacker. If Thornton is the starter, the Colts want to sign a free agent to push for the top job and draft a young linebacker to develop for the future and add depth. Louisville's Chad Lee, Clemson's Rodney Thomas and Mars Hill's Khalid Abdullah are projected late-round picks who could develop into quality backups.

7. Inside linebacker. Rob Morris finished last season with a flourish and should be better with improved size up front. However, he has had problems staying healthy, and backup Sam Sword is an unrestricted free agent. If Sword goes, the Colts need to add depth in the middle with one of these projected mid-round picks: Ohio State's Matt Wilhelm or Texas Tech's Lawrence Flugence.

8. Punter. Hunter Smith is neither consistent nor a great directional kicker. He has excellent leg strength. Teams rarely draft punters or kickers, but the Colts could use a late pick on Maryland's Brooks Barnard, Hawaii's Mat McBriar or Colorado's Mark Mariscal.

The outlook

The team made strides on defense last season after hiring coach Tony Dungy and using seven of eight draft picks on defense. The defense remains a primary focus again in this draft because the Colts need to add bulk in the middle of the line and speedy playmakers in the secondary. The Colts don't have a recent history of moving up in the draft, which makes getting a quality defensive tackle difficult with the 24th overall pick. The good news is the team can find a playmaking cornerback in this spot, and it has a history of getting good value with its late-round picks.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	● Peyton Manning	LE	■ Chad Bratzke
	❑ Brock Huard		❑ Raheem Brock
RB	● Edgerrin James	LT	■ Brad Scioli
	■ Dominic Rhodes		❑ Josh Williams
WR	■ Qadry Ismail	RT	■ Larry Tripplett
	❑ Troy Walters		❑ James Cannida
WR	■ Reggie Wayne	RE	■ Dwight Freeney
	❑ Adam Herzing		❑ Josh Mallard
LT	● Tarik Glenn	SLB	■ Marcus Washington
	❑ Waverly Jackson		❑ Sam Sword
LG	❑ Rick DeMulling	MLB	■ Rob Morris
	❑ Rob Murphy		❑ Sam Sword
C	■ Jeff Saturday	WLB	● Mike Peterson
	❑ Rob Murphy		❑ David Thornton
RG	■ Ryan Diem	LCB	■ Walt Harris
	❑ Rob Murphy		❑ Nick Harper
RT	■ Adam Meadows	SS	■ David Gibson
	❑ Waverly Jackson		❑ Cory Bird
TE	● Marcus Pollard	FS	❑ Idrees Bashir
	❑ Joe Dean Davenport		❑ Jason Doering
WR	● Marvin Harrison	RCB	❑ David Macklin
	❑ Drew Haddad		❑ Cliff Crosby
K	● Mike Vanderjagt	P	■ Hunter Smith

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

Marcus Pollard

MILES KENNEDY FOR TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY A-

The Colts have used 17 of their last 22 picks on defensive players, and the payoff is coming.

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	7	7	7	8
Starters	1	4	3	4	2
Backups	0	0	1	2	5
Other teams	2	1	0	1	1
Out of NFL	4	2	3	0	0

Although run defense remains a weakness, 2002 second-round DT Larry Tripplett should develop into an effective run stuffer, and 2000 first-round LB Rob Morris had a career-high 130 tackles last year. In addition, rookie first-round DE Dwight Freeney finished with 13 sacks, third most in the league.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Dwight Freeney, DE (16/8) Had a club-record 13 sacks despite starting just eight games. Pure speed rusher is perfect fit for Tony Dungy's cover 2.

2. Larry Tripplett, DT (13/10) Started 10 games and finished with 43 tackles.

3. Joseph Jefferson, CB (14/0) Was somewhat of a disappointment; didn't start a game and ended the season as the team's fifth corner.

4. David Thornton, LB (15/0) Undersized player who provides depth behind Mike Peterson. Can be productive on special teams.

6a. David Pugh, DT (4/1) Became part of a deep line rotation and has a future as a wave tackle.

6b. James Lewis, DB (0/0) Cut; now with Lions.

6c. Brian Allen, RB (0/0) Stuck behind a plethora of talented backs.

7. Josh Mallard, DE (13/0) Undersized end who served as backup to fellow rookie Freeney.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

Team needs

1. Wide receiver. Bobby Shaw, Patrick Johnson and Kevin Lockett are unrestricted free agents. Shaw might return, but he is a better fit as a slot receiver, and the team needs a productive No. 2 to draw attention from Jimmy Smith, who has lost a step with age and isn't as dominant as he was earlier in his career. Miami's Andre Johnson would be a solution, but he might not be available at the No. 8 pick. The team could use a second-round pick on a wideout such as Penn State's Bryant Johnson or Tennessee's Kelley Washington.

2. Defensive end. Tony Brackens, who played in just 17 games the past two seasons, is expected to be released. Fellow starter Marco Coleman is 33 and more of a situational pass rusher. The Jaguars likely will address this need by signing a free agent and in the draft. Texas' Cory Redding and Louisville's Dewayne White are projected first-day picks who can push for immediate playing time.

3. Middle linebacker. Wali Rainer is an effective interior run stopper, but he can't make plays from sideline to sideline. New coordinator Mike Smith's defense will be predicated on speed, so the team needs a linebacker with better range. LSU's Bradie James and Arizona's Lance Briggs are projected early- to middle-round selections and have the speed and athleticism to excel in this scheme.

4. Tight end. Kyle Brady isn't a great fit in new coordinator Bill Musgrave's West Coast scheme and might be a cap casualty. Pete Mitchell is an unrestricted free agent. Chris Luzar has the size (6-7, 260) to be an effective in-line blocker, so the team should add a receiver to complement him. Mississippi State's Donald Lee, Oregon's George Wrighster and Oklahoma's Trent Smith are likely mid-round picks and have the speed and athleticism to produce in this scheme.

5. Center. Unrestricted free agent John Wade is inconsistent but might re-sign. The team needs depth here regardless. Boston College's Dan Koppen, Miami's Brett Romberg and Colorado's Wayne Lucier are projected mid-round selections who could provide depth.

6. Guard. Starters Brad Meester and Chris Naeole both had poor seasons and could be replaced. Backup Drew Inzer would struggle if he had to start for an extended period. The team needs a guard who can provide depth and eventually start. Illinois' David Diehl and Penn State's Gus Felder fit the bill and should be available in the middle to later rounds.

7. Cornerback. The team needs a corner who has the size and cover skills to replace starter Jason Craft, who is better suited to cover slot receivers and could play nickel back. Unless it uses the No. 8 pick on Washington State's Marcus Trufant, the team probably will fill this need by signing a free agent.

8. Safety. Donovin Darius, who was given the franchise tag, is great against the run but a liability in coverage. Backup James Boyd lacks ideal speed. The team should improve its depth by using a late-round pick on a safety, such as Louisville's Anthony Floyd or Michigan State's Thomas Wright, who excels in coverage.

9. Outside linebacker. T.J. Slaughter missed 12 games the past two seasons, and backup Akin Ayodele is more effective against the pass than the run. The team must improve its depth by adding a linebacker with the speed to fit this scheme and the strength to anchor vs. the run. Vanderbilt's Hunter Hillenmeyer and Texas A&M's Jarrod Penright are projected late-round picks who could fit the bill.

10. Kicker. Danny Boyd was solid, but expect the team to sign a free agent and maybe draft a kicker to push him in camp. Tulane's Seth Marler and Cincinnati's Jonathan Ruffin are two of the better ones available.

11. Offensive tackle. Backups Zach Wiegert and Todd Fordham are unrestricted free agents, and Maurice Williams is coming off a season-ending injury. Clemson's Derrick Brantley, UCLA's Mike Saffer and Northwest Missouri State's Seth Wand would provide have the potential to become quality reserves.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Mark Brunell	LE	■ Rob Meier
	❑ David Garrard		❑ Javor Mills
FB	❑ Patrick Washington	LT	■ Marcus Stroud
	❑ Dan Alexander		❑ Reggie McGrew
RB	■ Fred Taylor	RT	■ John Henderson
	❑ Elvis Joseph		■ Larry Smith
WR	■ Jimmy Smith	RE	❑ Paul Spicer
	❑ Kevin Lockett		❑ Javor Mills
WR	❑ Bobby Shaw	SLB	■ Danny Clark
	❑ Micah Ross		■ Akin Ayodele
TE	■ Kyle Brady	MLB	❑ Wali Rainer
	❑ Chris Luzar		❑ T.J. Slaughter
LT	❑ Mike Pearson	WLB	■ T.J. Slaughter
	❑ Leander Jordan		❑ Eric Westmoreland
LG	■ Brad Meester	LCB	● Fernando Bryant
	❑ Drew Inzer		❑ Kiwaukee Thomas
C	■ John Wade	SS	■ Donovin Darius
	❑ Todd Fordham		❑ Ainsley Battles
RG	■ Chris Naeole	FS	❑ Marlon McCree
	❑ Drew Inzer		❑ Ainsley Battles
RT	■ Maurice Williams	RCB	❑ Jason Craft
	❑ Todd Fordham		❑ Ike Charlton
K	❑ Danny Boyd	P	■ Chris Hanson

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Player personnel director James Harris comes from the Ozzie Newsome school of drafting, which emphasizes taking the best available athlete instead of reaching to draft a player who fits a team need. With that in mind, the Jaguars would like Andre Johnson to fall to them at No. 8. If he is taken earlier, they might end up getting Trufant, who along with Fernando Bryant would give the team a talented and young cornerback tandem. The team would like to walk away from Day 1 with a receiver who could push for a starting job right away, a defensive end who eventually could replace Brackens, and a cornerback or middle linebacker, depending on what happens with the first pick. On Day 2, it needs to find a pass-catching tight end, address depth issues along the offensive line, get a safety with good cover skills and possibly a kicker.

Jimmy Smith

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	11	8	11	10	9
Starters	3	2	3	3	2
Backups	0	1	3	2	5
Other teams	2	0	0	4	1
Out of NFL	6	5	5	1	1

Jacksonville has selected a starting offensive lineman in the second round of each of the last three drafts, and the unit should develop into one of the best in the league. But first-round DTs Marcus Stroud and John Henderson have not progressed as quickly as hoped. The Jaguars also continue to have problems at wide receiver; 2000 first-rounder R. Jay Soward was a wasted pick.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. John Henderson, DT (16/13) Will dominate the middle alongside Marcus Stroud for years.

2. Mike Pearson, OT (16/11) Has ability to make Jags fans forget T. Boselli's loss in expansion draft.

3. Akin Ayodele, LB (16/3) Undersized end was moved to outside linebacker. Developmental player.

4a. David Garrard, QB (4/1) Backup showed playmaking ability in limited action in 2002.

4b. Chris Luzar, TE (12/0) Huge target at 6-7, 260. Currently a third-stringer, he needs development.

6. Clenton Ballard, DT (0/0) Developmental tackle who could become part of 4-man interior rotation.

7a. Kendall Newson, WR (0/0) Cut; no longer in NFL after spending brief time with Titans.

7b. Steve Smith, DB (4/0) Reserve corner who also can play safety.

7c. Hayden Epstein, K (15/0*) Cut; now with the Vikings as backup to Gary Anderson.

**Played six games with Jaguars, nine with Vikings*

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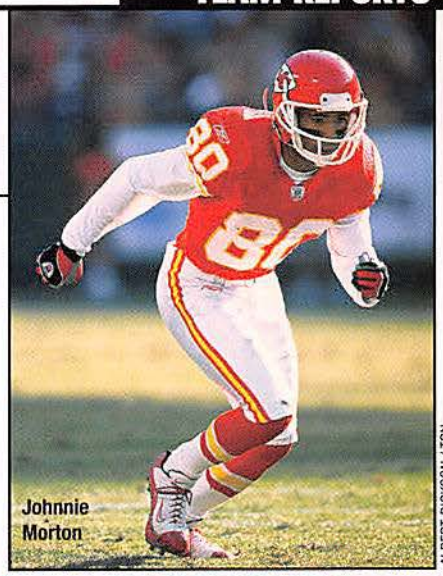
KANSAS CITY CHIEFS


Johnnie Morton

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

Team needs

1. Defensive end. An inconsistent pass rush was a big reason the Chiefs finished 31st in the NFL in pass defense last year. Eric Hicks is relentless but lacks speed and needs a dominant edge rusher to draw attention from him. Duane Clemons probably will be released. The team probably will look for a free-agent end who has the explosiveness to improve the pass rush and can push for the starting job in camp. But if it can't find one on the free-agent market, it could consider drafting Miami's Jerome McDougle in the first round or Texas' Cory Redding in the second.

2. Outside linebacker. Mike Maslowski lacks the combination of speed and athletic ability to excel on the outside, and the team would like to move him inside. First, however, he has to be re-signed. Backup Larry Atkins is a valuable special teams player but would struggle as a starter. He's a free agent who isn't expected to return. The team likely will sign a free agent for this position, then possibly use a third-round pick on an athletic replacement such as Oregon State's Nick Barnett, Michigan's Victor Hobson or Florida's Mike Nattiel.

3. Cornerback. William Bartee has the potential to be a quality starter but struggled last year. The team needs someone who can push him in camp. It could sign a free agent to start opposite Eric Warfield and make Bartee a nickel back. But it is more likely to use an early-round pick on a corner who can make an immediate impact in the nickel package and has the potential to develop into a starter. Washington State's Marcus Trufant or Oklahoma's Andre Woolfolk could push for a starting job—if they're available when the Chiefs pick 16th in the first round.

4. Wide receiver. Re-signing Eddie Kennison ensures Kansas City of having a deep threat. But Johnnie Morton was a disappointment last season, and though Marc Boerigter had a strong rookie year, he may not be ready to start. The Chiefs need a receiver who can add consistency and eventually push for a starting job. San Diego State's J.R. Tolver and Michigan's Ronald Bellamy are projected mid-round picks who have excellent route-running skills and reliable hands.

5. Inside linebacker. Even if Maslowski returns and moves inside, this will remain a need. Starter Marvcus Patton is an excellent interior run stuffer but turns 36 in May. Backup Monty Beisel strictly is a special teams player. Bottom line: The team needs to add quality depth. Oklahoma State's Terrence Robinson and Tennessee's Keyon Whiteside are projected late-round picks who would fit the bill.

6. Running back. There is little depth behind Priest Holmes. Mike Cloud is an unrestricted free agent and isn't likely to return. The Chiefs need a back who can carry the load if Holmes gets hurt. LSU's Domanick Davis and West Virginia's Avon Cobourne are projected mid-round picks who have the skills to be productive and provide depth.

7. Safety. Free safety Jerome Woods is coming off a broken leg that cost him the 2002 season, and backup Shaunard Harts is a developmental player who wasn't ready to play a significant role last year. Strong safety Greg Wesley missed too many tackles, and backup Jason Belser is an unrestricted free agent. With Woods' durability concerns and Wesley's struggles, a versatile reserve is needed who can provide adequate depth at both positions. Virginia Tech's Willie Pile and Ohio State's Donnie Nickey are middle-round possibilities.

8. Punter. Dan Stryzinski generally gets good hang time and has the ability to pin teams deep, but he didn't punt well last year and never has had great leg strength. Ideally, Stryzinski would retain his starting job and bounce back with a strong year. But the team must sign a punter to push him in camp, and it could use a late-round draft pick at the spot. Maryland's Brooks Barnard, Hawaii's Mat McBriar and Ohio State's Andy Groom are three of the better punters available.

The outlook

The majority of the focus will be on defense, where the team is searching for a pass-rushing end, improved speed at linebacker and a cornerback who can hold up better in man coverage than the existing starters. Because of the Willie Roaf trade with the Saints, the Chiefs are without a fourth-round pick, and that means pressure is on to find the best value in the first three rounds.

Because of the strength of the defensive end class—particularly in terms of pass-rushing specialists—it would make sense if the team chose a cornerback such as Trufant or Woolfolk with its first pick. Then it could draft an end such as Redding in the second round and take an athletic outside linebacker such as Hobson in the third. The team won't have a pick on Day 2 until the fifth round, and the focus then could shift to offense and special teams. It can wait until the seventh round to draft a quality punter.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Trent Green	LE	■ Eric Hicks
	❑ Todd Collins		❑ R-Kal Truluck
FB	■ Tony Richardson	LT	❑ John Browning
	❑ Omar Easy		❑ Nate Hobgood-Chittick
RB	● Priest Holmes	RT	■ Ryan Sims
	❑ Mike Cloud		❑ Derrick Ransom
WR	■ Eddie Kennison	RE	❑ Duane Clemons
	❑ Dante Hall		❑ Gary Stills
WR	■ Johnnie Morton	LLB	■ Scott Fujita
	❑ Marc Boerigter		❑ Lew Bush
TE	● Tony Gonzalez	MLB	■ Marvcus Patton
	❑ Jason Dunn		❑ Monty Beisel
LT	● Willie Roaf	RLB	❑ Mike Maslowski
	❑ Marcus Spears		❑ Tony Newson
LG	■ Brian Waters	LCB	❑ Eric Warfield
	❑ Donald Willis		❑ Corey Harris
C	■ Casey Wiegmann	SS	■ Greg Wesley
	❑ Donald Willis		❑ Clint Finley
RG	● Will Shields	FS	■ Jerome Woods
	❑ Donald Willis		❑ Shaunard Harts
RT	■ John Tait	RCB	❑ William Bartee
	❑ Willie Jones		❑ Ray Crockett
K	■ Morten Andersen	P	❑ Dan Stryzinski

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY 0+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	6	8	9	5
Starters	2	1	2	1	2
Backups	0	3	3	5	2
Other teams	2	0	2	3	1
Out of NFL	3	2	1	0	0

Despite using eight picks on running backs since '98, the Chiefs lack depth at the spot—a point that became apparent when Priest Holmes was out with an injury. The Chiefs also have failed to draft a dominant pass rusher or shutdown corner, resulting in a weak pass defense. Last year's first-round pick, DT Ryan Sims, missed most of the season with an elbow injury but has great potential.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Ryan Sims, DT (6/2) Came in out of shape after long holdout and missed 10 games with injuries. Team still plans to build its front seven around him.

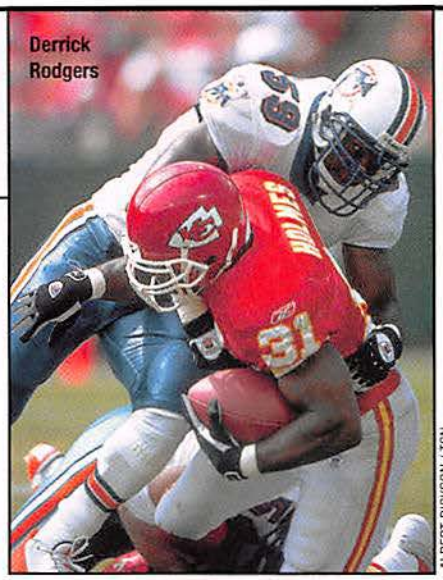
2. Eddie Freeman, DE (15/0) Converted to end. Still making the transition but is a physical talent who will compete for more playing time in 2003.

4. Omar Easy, FB (7/0) Backed up Tony Richardson but never carried ball from scrimmage. Has great tools but is a developmental prospect.

5. Scott Fujita, LB (16/9) K.C.'s best rookie started nine games and was fifth on team in tackles.

7. Maurice Rodriguez, LB (0/0) Cut; now on Rams' roster.

MIAMI DOLPHINS


Derrick Rodgers

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

Team needs

1. Left offensive tackle. Miami would like to re-sign Mark Dixon, but he has been hindered by ankle injuries and may be more valuable as a versatile backup who can play guard or tackle than as a starter. Ideally, the Dolphins would replace Dixon with a more skillful free agent, then use a middle- or late-round pick to improve depth. Georgia's Jon Stinchcomb is an excellent pass blocker who could push for a starting job in 2003, but he would cost the team its second-round pick. If the Dolphins do sign a free agent, Memphis' Wade Smith and San Jose State's Tim Provost are developmental left tackle prospects who should be available on Day 2.

2. Outside linebacker. Starters Morlon Greenwood and Derrick Rodgers had disappointing seasons in 2002. In addition, Scott Galyon is an unrestricted free agent who isn't expected to return, and Twan Russell missed the majority of last year with a knee injury. The Dolphins need more big plays from their outside linebackers, and they should put a premium on players who show good range. TCU's LaMarcus McDonald could be available in the second round, and Hawaii's Pisa Tinoisamoa and Ohio State's Cie Grant are developmental linebackers who will be around on Day 2.

3. Wide receiver. The Dolphins have an explosive No. 1 man in Chris Chambers, but they need a productive No. 2 receiver to draw attention away from him. Oronde Gadsden and Cris Carter are capable of filling the role, but both are unrestricted free agents who missed significant time with injuries last year and may not be back. Tennessee's Kelley Washington and Stanford's Teyo Johnson are projected early-round picks who have the size this unit could use.

4. Defensive tackle. This may not appear to be a need, but backup Jermaine Haley is a restricted free agent coming off a strong year, so he could sign with another team. Although starters Tim Bowens and Larry Chester should return, Bowens has a tendency to wear down in games and Chester has had problems staying healthy. It's important Miami add another two-gap defensive tackle to keep Bowens fresh and improve depth. Florida's Ian Scott and Tennessee's Rashad Moore are projected middle-round picks. Either could play 10 to 15 snaps per game as a situational run stuffer.

5. Safety. Brock Marion went to the Pro Bowl last year. Though Arturo Freeman struggled at times in his first year as a starting strong safety, he improved enough to retain his starting job. The problem is there's little depth behind them, and Marion, who clearly has lost a step, turns 33 in June. Miami needs to start grooming a possible replacement, preferably someone versatile enough to play either safety position. Michigan State's Thomas Wright and Virginia's Jerton Evans are projected mid- to late-round picks who would benefit from playing behind Marion for a year.

6. Quarterback. When Jay Fiedler went down with a fractured thumb last year, backup Ray Lucas struggled. Lucas might be released. No. 3 man Sage Rosenfels will be given an opportunity to win the No. 2 job in training camp, but Miami needs a proven backup to Fielder, who has missed seven starts in the last three seasons. Eastern Illinois' Tony Romo and Portland State's Juston Wood are developmental quarterbacks who have the potential to excel in the Dolphins' scheme.

7. Punter. Unrestricted free agent Mark Royals is coming off a disappointing season and may not be back. The Dolphins likely will sign a free agent to compete for the punting job in training camp, but they could use a late-round draft pick, too. Hawaii's Mat McBriar and Maryland's Brooks Barnard are two of the better punters available.

The outlook

The Dolphins have very few pressing needs and plan to address some, if not all, of them with free agents. With the Saints in possession of Miami's first-round pick as a result of the Ricky Williams trade, the Dolphins' first choice isn't until the second round—the 40th overall selection. At that point, senior vice president Rick Spielman and coach Dave Wannstedt, who makes all final decisions in the Dolphins' war room, must decide whether to draft a receiver such as Johnson, who could contribute right away in multiple-receiver sets, or look more toward the future by taking a left tackle such as Stinchcomb or an outside linebacker such as McDonald.

Because the outside linebacker class is so weak, it makes sense for the Dolphins to take one with their second-round pick, then wait until the third round to decide between the best available wideout and offensive tackle. The Dolphins also traded their picks in the fourth and sixth rounds, which means that before the supplemental picks were announced, the team had only two Day 2 draft choices—in the fifth and seventh rounds. Defensive tackle, safety, punter and quarterback are positions that could be addressed with those picks.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Jay Fiedler	LE	■ Adewale Ogunleye
	❑ Ray Lucas		❑ Jay Williams
FB	■ Rob Konrad	LT	■ Tim Bowens
	■ Deon Dyer		❑ Dario Romero
RB	● Ricky Williams	RT	■ Larry Chester
	❑ Robert Edwards		■ Jermaine Haley
WR	❑ Oronde Gadsden	RE	● Jason Taylor
	❑ James McKnight		❑ David Bowens
WR	■ Chris Chambers	WLB	❑ Derrick Rodgers
	❑ Dedric Ward		❑ Scott Galyon
TE	■ Randy McMichael	MLB	● Zach Thomas
	■ Jed Weaver		❑ Tommy Hendricks
LT	■ Mark Dixon	SLB	■ Morlon Greenwood
	❑ Brent Smith		❑ Twan Russell
LG	■ Jamie Nails	LCB	● Patrick Surtain
	■ Mark Dixon		❑ Omare Lowe
C	■ Seth McKinney	SS	■ Arturo Freeman
	■ Tim Ruddy		❑ Shawn Wooden
RG	■ Todd Perry	FS	■ Brock Marion
	❑ Dwayne Pierce		❑ Trent Gamble
RT	● Todd Wade	RCB	● Sam Madison
	❑ Marcus Spriggs		❑ Jamar Fletcher
K	● Olindo Mare	P	■ Mark Royals

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B-

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	10	8	6	9	5
Starters	1	1	2	2	2
Backups	1	1	1	2	3
Other teams	3	2	2	3	0
Out of NFL	5	4	1	2	0

Half of the Dolphins' 18 picks from 1998 and 1999 are out of the league. But the team had a strong 2002 draft despite not having a first- or second-round pick. The Dolphins have built one of the NFL's best secondaries, and '01 first-round CB Jamar Fletcher continues to improve. They've done a great job in the second round with impact players WR Chris Chambers and CB Patrick Surtain.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

3. Seth McKinney, C (16/2) Moved to left guard and provided depth behind Jamie Nails—and even started a couple of games there after Nails got hurt. But team wants McKinney to push Tim Ruddy for the starting center job next season.

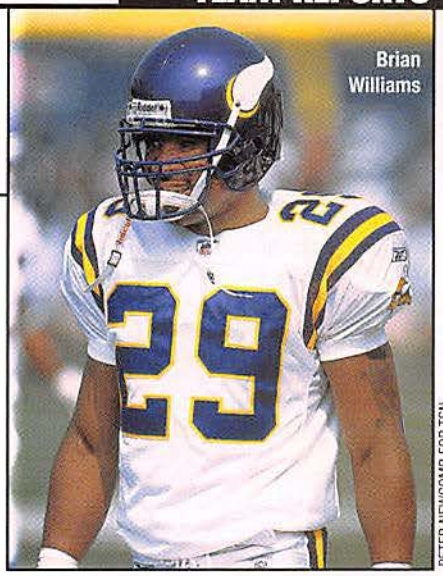
4. Randy McMichael, TE (16/16) A fourth-round steal. Is a terrific athlete who has the speed to stretch the seams as a receiver. Caught 39 passes, but production tailed off late in the season.

5a. Omare Lowe, CB (1/0) Stuck behind a strong group of corners. Will provide depth and be given the opportunity to push for the No. 4 corner job.

5b. Sam Simmons, WR (0/0) Pint-size receiver and return specialist will be given the opportunity to compete for last receiver spot this season.

7. Leonard Henry, RB (0/0) A backup who is buried deep on the depth chart.

MINNESOTA VIKINGS


Brian Williams

PETER NEWCOMB FOR TSN

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. The team lacks a massive two-gap defensive tackle to complement Chris Hovan. Fred Robbins filled that role last year, but he doesn't play with great intensity and tends to wear down late in games. The Vikings need a dominant interior run stuffer who can move Robbins to a backup role. Kentucky's Dewayne Robertson and Washington State's Rien Long are the two most likely candidates to be selected by the Vikings if they take a defensive tackle in the first round.

2. Cornerback. Minnesota is happy with the play of Brian Williams, and he will return as a starter. But the other starter, Eric Kelly, lacks the size to play on the outside. The Vikings should move Kelly to nickel back, where he has the cover skills to excel. The team could fill this need with a free agent who can provide much-needed experience. However, Kansas State's Terence Newman and Washington State's Marcus Trufant have the potential to develop into shutdown corners, and the team could select either with the seventh overall pick. If the Vikings wait until the second round, Illinois' Eugene Wilson and Oregon State's Dennis Weathersby could help.

3. Defensive end. If unrestricted free agent Lance Johnstone re-signs, he likely will fill a reserve role. The team had one of the league's least productive pass rushes last year. Because the Vikings have a young secondary, the pass rush must force quarterbacks to get rid of the ball quickly. The Vikings are well under the salary cap, so this is a need they likely will fill with a high-profile free agent. If they don't, they could pick up a player such as Nebraska's Chris Kelsay in the second round.

4. Offensive tackle. Even if left guard Corbin Lacina, an unrestricted free agent, returns, the Vikings want to have someone else start in his spot. The candidates are starting right tackle Chris Liwienski and his backup, Lewis Kelly. The team will need to add depth if either player changes positions. Wisconsin's Ben Johnson and Illinois' Tony Pashos are excellent run blockers with the potential to develop into quality starters, and both should be around when the Vikings pick in the third round. There also is a possibility Minnesota will draft a guard capable of beating out Lacina. Florida State's Montrae Holland and Southern Mississippi's Torrin Tucker are projected early-round picks who could excel in Minnesota's scheme.

5. Safety. Backup Ronnie Bradford retired, and the team will add a free agent or draft pick to push Jack Brewer for the starting free safety job. There also is a chance the Vikings will move Corey Chavous to free safety and Brewer to strong safety. No matter what happens, the team will need to add a versatile safety who can provide quality depth and push for playing time at either position. This is another need the Vikings could fill with a free agent, but Florida's Todd Johnson, Houston's Hanik Milligan and Ohio State's Donnie Nickey are projected middle-round selections who fit the mold and could develop into starters.

6. Wide receiver. The team lacks ideal depth and an explosive slot receiver. Although Kelly Campbell flashed the potential to fill this need last year, he is inconsistent and probably better suited to be the No. 4 receiver. Though the Vikings could fill this need with a proven free agent, Arizona State's Shaun McDonald, Arizona's Bobby Wade and Oregon's Keenan Howry are projected middle-round picks who are dangerous after the catch and capable of contributing in the return game.

7. Outside linebacker. Backup weakside linebacker Raonall Smith will challenge Nick Rogers for the starting job on the strong side. Defensive coordinator George O'Leary plans to use a 3-4 scheme occasionally this year, so the depth will need to be improved. With the Vikings looking to improve their pass rush, they should draft a developmental linebacker who excels at getting to the quarterback. Texas A&M's Jarrod Penright, North Carolina State's Shawn Price and Louisville's Chad Lee would be good fits, and each should be available late.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Daunte Culpepper	LE	■ Kenny Mixon
	❑ Todd Bouman		❑ Chuck Wiley
RB	■ Michael Bennett	NT	❑ Fred Robbins
	❑ Moe Williams		❑ Darius Holland
WR	■ D'Wayne Bates	UT	■ Chris Hovan
	❑ Cedric James		❑ Chuck Wiley
WR	● Randy Moss	RE	❑ Lance Johnstone
	❑ Chris Walsh		❑ Lorenzo Bromell
TE	■ Jim Kleinsasser	OLB	❑ Nick Rogers
	❑ Hunter Goodwin		❑ Raonall Smith
TE	■ Byron Chamberlain	MLB	■ Greg Biekert
	❑ Hunter Goodwin		❑ Jim Nelson
LT	■ Bryant McKinnie	OLB	■ Henri Crockett
	❑ Everett Lindsay		❑ Antonio Wilson
LG	❑ Corbin Lacina	LCB	■ Brian Williams
	❑ Everett Lindsay		❑ Tyrone Carter
C	● Matt Birk	SS	■ Corey Chavous
	❑ Cory Withrow		❑ Willie Offord
RG	■ David Dixon	FS	❑ Jack Brewer
	❑ Cory Withrow		❑ Brian Russell
RT	■ Chris Liwienski	RCB	❑ Eric Kelly
	❑ Lewis Kelly		❑ Tyrone Carter
K	❑ Gary Anderson	P	■ Kyle Richardson

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Of all the teams that finished under .500 last season, the Vikings showed the most promise at the end and may only be four or five players away from contending for a playoff berth. The team should draft Newman if he's available at No. 7, but that's not likely. It would make sense for the Vikings to draft a defensive tackle in the first round, a cornerback in the second and a rush end with their last pick on Day 1.

On the second day, look for the Vikings to improve their depth along the offensive line. They also should try to bring in a versatile safety and select developmental players at wide receiver and outside linebacker.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	8	9	10	8	7
Starters	2	2	2	2	3
Backups	0	1	4	4	2
Other teams	1	2	1	1	2
Out of NFL	5	4	3	1	0

Coach Mike Tice is a former offensive line coach with a great eye for offensive line talent, and the Vikings did an outstanding job by selecting two-time Pro Bowl C Matt Birk in the sixth round in 1998 and versatile backup Lewis Kelly in the seventh round in 2000. After a somewhat disappointing rookie season, 2001 first-round RB Michael Bennett played in the Pro Bowl last season.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Bryant McKinnie, OT (8/7) Instantly became the starter at left tackle after being the last first-round pick to sign a contract. Quickly proved his value.

2. Raonall Smith, LB (0/0) Missed season with shoulder injury. Probably wasn't ready to start. Team wants him to start at an outside spot.

3. Willie Offord, S (12/6) Started six games early in season but will have to push Corey Chavous for playing time at strong safety this season.

4a. Brian Williams, CB (16/7) Team is excited about his future, but a starting job is not guaranteed for 2003.

4b. Ed Ta'Amu, G (0/0) Signed off practice squad by Texans at end of last season.

6. Nick Rogers, LB (16/11) Took over as the starter on the strong side at midseason. Will start again in 2003 and should put more heat on quarterbacks.

7. Chad Beasley, DT (0/0) Cut; picked up by Browns and moved to guard.

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Richard Seymour

JOHN DUNN FOR TSN

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. Richard Seymour is dominant but wears down against double-teams. New England needs a massive run stuffer who can take up blockers at the line and draw attention from Seymour. Kentucky's Dewayne Robertson and Oklahoma State's Kevin Williams are first-round prospects who would be excellent complements to Seymour and could improve a run defense that finished 31st last season. Rick Lyle and Bernard Holsey are free agents, so depth must be addressed later with prospects such as Tennessee's Aubrayo Franklin or South Carolina's Langston Moore.

2. Running back. Antowain Smith lacks the speed and receiving skills to excel in this pass-heavy scheme. Backup Kevin Faulk is more productive in the passing game and has the elusiveness to make defenders miss, but he's undersized and has problems protecting the ball. The team needs a back who has the bulk to carry the load and is a threat to make big plays. Oregon's Onterrio Smith and Colorado's Chris Brown are explosive backs who have the potential eventually to replace Smith, but getting either would cost the team its second-round pick.

3. Cornerback. New England must add a player who has the cover skills to push for playing time opposite shutdown corner Ty Law and the speed to stay with receivers in the vertical passing game. Oregon State's Dennis Weathersby and Texas A&M's Sammy Davis are late first-day prospects who would be good fits in this scheme and could make an immediate impact.

4. Middle linebacker. Tedy Bruschi plays with great intensity but lacks bulk and missed five games with injuries last year. Former starter Ted Johnson also has had problems staying healthy. The Patriots need to add an interior linebacker so that Bruschi could move to the weak side and Johnson could be used to provide quality depth. Maryland's E.J. Henderson is excellent against the run and could start immediately.

5. Defensive end. Jarvis Green has the potential to develop into an every-down end, and starters Anthony Pleasant and Bobby Hamilton are expected to return. But New England should try to add a situational pass rusher. Florida State's Alonzo Jackson and Cal's Tully Banta-Cain have an excellent combination of speed and athletic ability and should be available in the third round.

6. Guard. With Mike Compton turning 33 this year, the Patriots need a guard who eventually can push for a starting role while providing quality depth. Illinois' David Diehl, Northwestern's Jeff Roehl and Harvard's Jamil Soriano would be good fits, and they should be around in the middle to late rounds.

7. Punter. Ken Walter gets good hang time but lacks leg strength. He was one of the league's worst punters last year. Hawaii's Mat McBriar, Ohio State's Andy Groom and Maryland's Brooks Barnard are three of the better punters available.

8. Outside linebacker. If Bruschi moves, this won't be as big a need, but Roman Phifer is on the downside of his career and the team needs to improve the depth behind him. Hawaii's Pisa Tinoisamoa, Vanderbilt's Hunter Hillenmeyer and Tennessee's Eddie Moore are developmental players who have the athletic ability to push Phifer on passing downs.

9. Free safety. Because Tebucky Jones lacks ideal cover skills, New England should add a safety who excels in coverage and can handle the tight end in man-to-man schemes. Michigan's Charles Drake and Texas A&M's Terrence Kiel are projected late-round picks who can provide adequate depth.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	● Tom Brady	LE	■ Bobby Hamilton
	❑ Damon Huard		❑ Rick Lyle
FB	■ Marc Edwards	LT	● Richard Seymour
	❑ Patrick Pass		❑ Bernard Holsey
RB	❑ Antowain Smith	RT	❑ Rick Lyle
	❑ Kevin Faulk		■ Jarvis Green
WR	● Troy Brown	RE	❑ Anthony Pleasant
	■ Deion Branch		■ Jarvis Green
WR	❑ David Patten	LLB	❑ Mike Vrabel
	❑ David Givens		■ Willie McGinest
TE	■ Christian Fauria	MLB	■ Tedy Bruschi
	■ Daniel Graham		■ Ted Johnson
LT	■ Matt Light	RLB	■ Roman Phifer
	❑ Adrian Klemm		■ Willie McGinest
LG	■ Mike Compton	LCB	● Ty Law
	❑ Grey Ruegamer		❑ Terrell Buckley
C	● Damien Woody	SS	● Lawyer Milloy
	■ Mike Compton		■ Victor Green
RG	❑ Joe Andruzzi	FS	■ Tebucky Jones
	❑ Ross Hotchkiss		■ Victor Green
RT	■ Kenyatta Jones	RCB	❑ Leonard Myers
	❑ Adrian Klemm		❑ Terrell Buckley
K	● Adam Vinatieri	P	❑ Ken Walter

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Coach Bill Belichick and vice president of player personnel Scott Pioli plan to focus on beefing up their defensive front seven in the draft. Specifically, the Patriots could select a defensive tackle and a middle linebacker with their two picks in the first round (Nos. 14 and 19), the first of which came from the Drew Bledsoe trade last season.

Belichick and defensive coordinator Romeo Crennel are looking for a two-gap tackle such as Robertson to take some of the attention away from Seymour. They also are eager to bring in a physical presence at middle linebacker, and Henderson figures to be available. With one pick in both the second and third rounds, the Patriots will keep their focus on defense, where they could come away with a cornerback such as Weathersby in the second round and a defensive end/outside linebacker such as Banta-Cain in the third round.

With an extra selection in the fourth round (Packers), fifth round (Cowboys) and seventh round (Rams), the Patriots will have plenty of bait with which to move up in an early round. They also will have plenty of opportunities to address depth issues along the offensive line and at outside linebacker, safety and wide receiver. They also can afford to draft a punter in a late round.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B-

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	10	8	10	10	6
Starters	1	1	1	3	1
Backups	0	1	5	1	5
Other teams	5	1	2	4	0
Out of NFL	4	5	2	2	0

The Patriots are coming off of a solid 2002 draft; all six picks contributed last year. Sixth-round QB Tom Brady ('00) has proved that his strong 2001 season wasn't a fluke. In addition, first-round picks Damien Woody (1999) and Richard Seymour ('01) each went to his first Pro Bowl after last season. However, just one of four picks used on tight ends over the last three years remains on the roster.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Daniel Graham, TE (12/6) Served as a backup behind Christian Fauria. Expected to push for starting spot next season.

2. Deion Branch, WR (13/7) Excelled as third or fourth receiver and as a returner. Wore down late, but he's a future starter.

4a. Rohan Davey, QB (2/0) Impressed coaches with size, arm and leadership. Team wants him to push for backup job in camp.

4b. Jarvis Green, DE (15/4) Was the surprise of team's draft class. Made four starts and backed up Anthony Pleasant. Versatility makes him a great fit.

7a. Antwoine Womack, RB (0/0) Hasn't fully recovered from college knee injury. A prospect who spent most of his time on practice squad, he will push for a roster spot this summer—if healthy.

7b. David Givens, WR (12/0) Played more as the season progressed. His hands are a question after some late drops. Will push for No. 4 receiver job.

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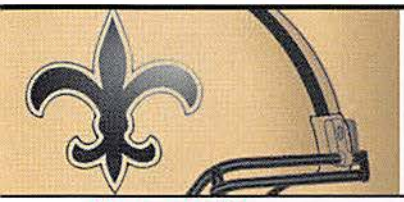
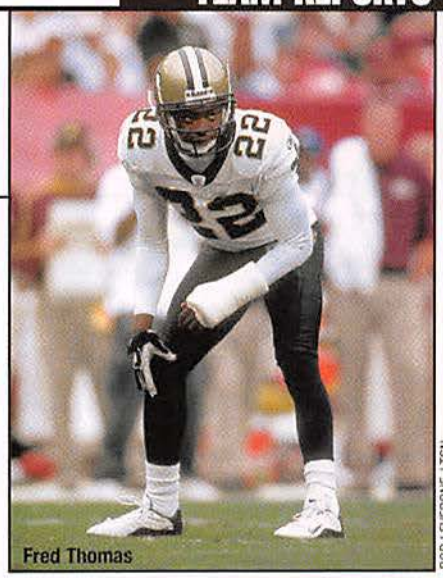


NEW ORLEANS SAINTS


Fred Thomas

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

Team needs

1. Safety. The team could have two new starters, as strong safety Sammy Knight is an unrestricted free agent and free safety Jay Bellamy could be released after making too many mistakes. Backup Mel Mitchell would struggle as a starter, so the Saints probably will sign a free agent to allow him to develop for another year. They could move Keyuo Craver and Michael Hawthorne to free safety should Bellamy not return. However, they'll need time to adjust, and the Saints need a safety who can challenge for the starting job this season. Ohio State's Mike Doss and Southern California's Troy Polamalu, both projected first-round picks, have the potential to make an immediate impact.

2. Cornerback. Fred Thomas has excellent covers skills but is undersized and would be a better fit at nickel back. Reserves Craver and Hawthorne are bigger but have a tendency to get caught out of position, and at least one might move to safety. Plus, Ken Irvin is an unrestricted free agent. The Saints need a corner with the size to play outside and the cover skills to replace Thomas as a starter. Washington State's Marcus Trufant or Oklahoma's Andre Woolfolk could push for playing time early and develop into a shutdown corner opposite Dale Carter.

3. Middle linebacker. The team isn't expected to re-sign unrestricted free agent Charlie Clemons after his sack production dropped significantly last season. The Saints could replace him with a proven veteran or an early-round selection such as Kansas State's Terry Pierce or Pittsburgh's Gerald Hayes. Depth also is an issue because backup Bryan Cox is an unrestricted free agent. The team allowed 4.5 yards a carry last year and could add a situational run stuffer such as Auburn's Mark Brown or Florida's Byron Hardman.

4. Defensive end. Charles Grant should replace unrestricted free agent Willie Whitehead as the starter opposite Darren Howard, but Grant has problems disengaging blocks quickly and could wear down in his first year as a starter. So, the team should bring in a situational run stuffer to help keep Grant fresh for passing downs. Florida's Clint Mitchell and Alabama's Kindal Moorehead should be available in the third round.

5. Defensive tackle. Because Norman Hand will become a cap casualty if he doesn't restructure his contract and because Grady Jackson has a tendency to wear down during games, depth is a critical issue. Martin Chase is inconsistent, and Whitehead, who will play tackle if he re-signs, lacks ideal size. The Saints probably would like to sign a free-agent tackle. But if both Hand and Whitehead sign elsewhere, the team will need to use a mid-round pick on a situational run stuffer such as Stanford's Matt Leonard or Iowa's Colin Cole.

6. Tight end. David Sloan, who is coming off a poor season, has a history of injury problems. Backup Boo Williams has great speed and reliable hands but often gets blown back at the point of attack and likely would struggle as an every-down player. And Lamont Hall is an unrestricted free agent. The team could use one of its first-round picks on Tennessee's Jason Witten or Iowa's Dallas Clark, either of whom eventually could replace Sloan.

7. Offensive tackle. It appears left tackle Kyle Turley will return next season, but backup Scott Sanderson is an unrestricted free agent and right tackle Spencer Folau isn't a dominant run blocker. Reserve Victor Riley could replace Folau, who then could provide depth behind Turley, but Riley has problems staying in shape. Tennessee's Will Ofenheusle and Florida State's Todd Williams are projected middle-round selections with excellent run-blocking skills who could provide adequate depth.

8. Center. Jerry Fontenot and backup Bubba Miller both are unrestricted free agents over 30, so the team would be wise to add a center with the potential to start. Alabama's Alonzo Ephraim and Northern Iowa's Chad Setterstrom are developmental centers who should be available late in the draft.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Aaron Brooks	LE	■ Charles Grant
	❑ Jake Delhomme		❑ Kenny Smith
FB	■ Terrelle Smith	LT	■ Grady Jackson
	❑ Demetrius Smith		❑ Martin Chase
RB	● Deuce McAllister	RT	❑ Willie Whitehead
	❑ Curtis Keaton		❑ Kenny Smith
WR	■ Donte Stallworth	RE	■ Darren Howard
	■ Jerome Pathon		❑ Kenny Smith
WR	● Joe Horn	OLB	❑ James Allen
	❑ Derrick Lewis		❑ Roger Knight
TE	■ David Sloan	MLB	■ Darrin Smith
	❑ Boo Williams		❑ Curtis Holden
LT	■ Kyle Turley	OLB	■ Sedrick Hodge
	❑ Scott Sanderson		❑ Roger Knight
LG	■ Kendyl Jacox	LCB	■ Dale Carter
	❑ Wally Williams		❑ Ken Irvin
C	■ Jerry Fontenot	SS	❑ Mel Mitchell
	❑ Bubba Miller		❑ Steve Gleason
RG	■ LeCharles Bentley	FS	❑ Jay Bellamy
	❑ Wally Williams		❑ Michael Hawthorne
RT	■ Spencer Folau	RCB	❑ Fred Thomas
	❑ Victor Riley		❑ Keyuo Craver
K	■ John Carney	P	■ Toby Gowin

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	8	1	9	7	9
Starters	1	0	2	2	2
Backups	0	0	2	1	5
Other teams	3	1	4	2	2
Out of NFL	4	0	1	2	0

Selecting Deuce McAllister in the first round in 2001 allowed the Saints to trade Ricky Williams and pick up two first-round picks while actually improving their production at running back. The Saints also produced one of the strongest drafts in 2002, as their top three picks—WR Donte' Stallworth, DE Charles Grant and G LeCharles Bentley—made immediate impacts.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1a. Donte' Stallworth, WR (13/7) Was impressive despite injuries. Is big and has the speed to stretch defenses. Is team's future go-to guy.

1b. Charles Grant, DE (16/6) Showed a lot of promise with seven sacks. Should take over at left end for Willie Whitehead.

2. LeCharles Bentley, G (14/14) Moved to right guard and played like a veteran from Day 1. Should be an anchor in the middle for years.

3. James Allen, LB (14/1) Added much-needed bulk but still received limited action.

4. Keyuo Craver, CB (10/1) Didn't develop as quickly as coaches would have liked.

5. Mel Mitchell, S (16/0) Is being groomed as Sammy Knight's eventual replacement.

6a. J.T. O'Sullivan, QB (0/0) Could win the backup job if free agent Jake Delhomme leaves.

6b. John Gilmore, TE (8/4*) Cut; signed by Bears.

7. Derrius Monroe, DE (0/0) Cut; signed by Dallas.

**Games played with another NFL team*

The outlook

The three areas in which the Saints stand to make significant improvements in the draft are middle linebacker, tight end and the secondary. Tight end isn't nearly as pressing a need as middle linebacker and the secondary, but drafting Witten with one of consecutive first-round picks (Nos. 17 and 18) would provide quarterback Aaron Brooks with a weapon in the middle of the field that he has been lacking. With the other pick, the team could draft the best available prospect at safety (possibly Doss) or cornerback (Trufant or Woolfolk).

With two more picks on Day 1, the team could draft another secondary prospect and a middle linebacker. With their two fourth-round picks, the Saints likely will focus on improving the depth along the defensive line. They also will look to address depth issues at offensive tackle and center on Day 2.

NEW YORK GIANTS

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. It is unknown how an Achilles' tendon injury that forced Keith Hamilton to miss most of last year will affect his play. Cornelius Griffin progressed and has become an explosive one-gap defensive tackle who makes plays in the backfield. Griffin, however, has problems splitting double-teams and needs a dominant interior run stuffer to draw attention away from him. Georgia's Johnathan Sullivan and Ohio State's Kenny Peterson are possibilities late in the first round. Either player could help improve a run defense that gave up an average of 4.5 yards per carry last year.

2. Defensive end. Kenny Holmes remains inconsistent, and the Giants probably will release him. Backup Frank Ferrara is a situational player. New York needs to add an every-down right end who has the strength to anchor against the run and the pass-rushing skills to take advantage of the double-teams Michael Strahan draws on the left side. Miami's Jerome McDougle, Penn State's Michael Haynes and Nebraska's Chris Kelsay have the potential to make an immediate impact.

3. Offensive tackle. Both starters, left tackle Luke Petitgout and right tackle Mike Rosenthal, are free agents. If the Giants lose either player, this position obviously becomes a high priority in the draft. If Petitgout leaves, a replacement would have to be found in the free-agent market or in the draft. If Rosenthal goes, the Giants could go with Ian Allen, who is on their roster but is inexperienced, or look for a free agent. Regardless, the Giants need to add depth in the draft. Louisiana Tech's Damian Lavergne and Texas' Robbie Doane are projected late-round picks who have the run-blocking skills to offer depth on the right side.

4. Wide receiver. Amani Toomer has become the Giants' go-to receiver. Free agent Ike Hilliard, who has a history of injuries, could leave. Ron Dixon isn't consistent enough to push for the No. 2 role. If Hilliard leaves, the Giants should sign a free agent to be the No. 2 man. Either way, the team should use an early- or mid-round pick to improve its depth. North Carolina's Sam Aiken and Central Florida's Douglas Gabriel have the potential to develop into effective receivers.

5. Inside linebacker. Mike Barrow led the Giants in tackles in 2002, but he turns 33 in April. He lacks ideal bulk for a middle linebacker. Backup Nick Greisen has problems anchoring at the point of attack. At this point, Greisen is strictly a special teams player. New York needs to improve its size and depth in the middle with a linebacker who excels at stopping the inside run. Syracuse's Clifton Smith and Georgia's Tony Gilbert are capable of contributing as situational run stuffers, and both have the potential to become starters.

6. Free safety. The Giants might replace free-agent starter Omar Stoutmire with another free agent or a safety in the draft. Even if Stoutmire comes back, the team needs to add depth at this spot. Strong safety Shaun Williams is a run-stopping force, and New York needs a free safety with good range and excellent coverage skills. Michigan State's Thomas Wright, Michigan's Charles Drake and Texas A&M's Terrence Kiel have the combination of speed and athletic ability to provide adequate depth. All should be available late in the draft.

7. Cornerback. If Jason Sehorn is released, the Giants will need to add depth at corner. Will Allen and Will Peterson both missed time last season, and Ralph Brown is too inconsistent to be depended upon as a potential starter. New York needs a corner who can contribute in the nickel package and has the cover skills to start for short periods. The Giants' best hopes for filling this void are to sign a free agent or hope Oregon State's Dennis Weathersby or Tuskegee's Drayton Florence slips to the fourth round.

8. Punter. The Giants need to address this position after cutting inconsistent Matt Allen. The team signed Steve Cheek, but it will continue to seek free-agent help and also could use a late-round draft pick on Hawaii's Mat McBriar, Maryland's Brooks Barnard, Ohio State's Andy Groom or UCLA's Nate Fikse.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

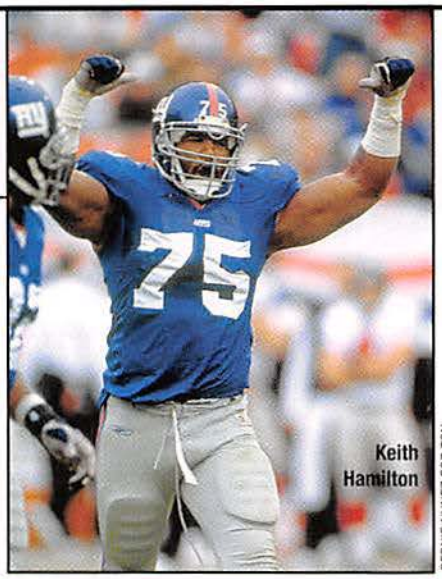
	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Kerry Collins	LE	● Michael Strahan
	❑ Jesse Palmer		❑ Frank Ferrara
FB	■ Charles Stackhouse	LT	■ Cornelius Griffin
	None		❑ Dwight Johnson
RB	● Tiki Barber	RT	■ Keith Hamilton
	❑ Ron Dayne		❑ Lance Legree
WR	● Amani Toomer	RE	■ Kenny Holmes
	❑ Tim Carter		❑ Byron Frisch
WR	■ Ike Hilliard	SLB	■ Brandon Short
	❑ Ron Dixon		❑ Quincy Monk
TE	● Jeremy Shockey	MLB	■ Mike Barrow
	❑ Dan Campbell		❑ Nick Greisen
LT	■ Luke Petitgout	WLB	■ Dhani Jones
	❑ Jeff Hatch		❑ Kevin Lewis
LG	■ Rich Seubert	LCB	■ Will Allen
	■ Jason Whittle		❑ Ralph Brown
C	■ Chris Bober	SS	■ Shaun Williams
	❑ Omar Smith		❑ Clarence LeBlanc
RG	■ Jason Whittle	FS	❑ Omar Stoutmire
	❑ Tam Hopkins		❑ DeWayne Patmon
RT	■ Mike Rosenthal	RCB	■ Will Peterson
	❑ Ian Allen		❑ Kato Serwanga
K	❑ Matt Bryant	P	❑ Steve Cheek

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

General manager Ernie Accorsi and coach Jim Fassel want to improve the defensive line early in the draft. The team has needs at tackle and end. Considering the quantity of players with first-round grades, the Giants can expect to walk away from the first round with a quality player at one position or the other.

With its other picks on Day 1, the team will address the defensive-line position that it didn't deal with in the first round, then will look to select a wide receiver or an inside linebacker. On Day 2, the Giants will want to attend to depth issues in the offensive line, then draft an athletic free safety with developmental skills.



Keith Hamilton

BERNIE NUNEZ FOR TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	6	9	7	7	7
Starters	1	2	3	2	2
Backups	0	1	3	2	5
Other teams	1	2	0	2	0
Out of NFL	4	4	1	1	0

The Giants used two of their last five first-round picks on the secondary; 2001 third-round CB Will Peterson has progressed quicker than expected, giving New York a young, strong pass defense. First-round TE Jeremy Shockey (2002) was the only rookie in last year's Pro Bowl, but 2000 first-round RB Ron Dayne is a backup whose production hasn't matched what was expected.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Jeremy Shockey, TE (15/13) One of the NFL's biggest impact rookies of '02. Is a huge playmaker in the passing game, but his blocking needs work.

2. Tim Carter, WR (5/0) Played very little. Has size and speed but must stay healthy. Could be a No. 3 receiver and return specialist this season.

3. Jeff Hatch, OT (0/0) A prospect who has good athletic skills. Should move up from No. 3 on the depth chart at left tackle.

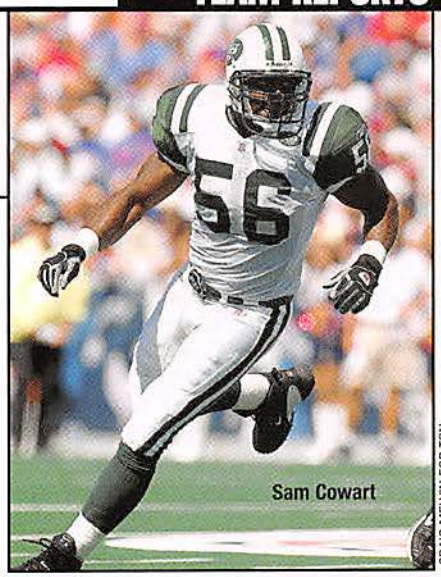
5. Nick Greisen, LB (8/1) Not a great talent, but he is being groomed as Mike Barrow's eventual replacement at middle linebacker.

6. Wesly Mallard, LB (15/0) Is mostly a special teams player who is a backup on the weak side.

7a. Daryl Jones, WR (13/6) Gained valuable experience and likely will be No. 4 receiver this season.

7b. Quincy Monk, LB (9/0) Undersized but athletic. Will have to fight for a roster spot.

NEW YORK JETS


Sam Cowart

CRAIG MELVIN FOR TSN

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. The Jets need a massive situational run stuffer to help keep Jason Ferguson fresh. Larry Webster had been expected to fill this need, but he struggled last year and, as an unrestricted free agent, isn't expected back. Texas A&M's Ty Warren, Clemson's Nick Eason and Oregon State's Eric Manning should make an immediate impact in the NFL, and one could be available late in the second round.

2. Guard. If Randy Thomas, an unrestricted free agent, signs with another team, the Jets could replace him with Jonathan Goodwin or J.P Machado, but Goodwin still is raw and, in 12 starts last year, Machado was adequate at best. Both lack lower body strength as well as Thomas' dominance as a run blocker. Should Thomas leave, the team could sign a free agent, allowing Goodwin to develop for another year, or it could draft a guard to push Goodwin in training camp. Late first-day prospects should include Florida State's Montrae Holland, Texas' Derrick Dockery and Southern Miss' Torrin Tucker; each has the combination of size and power to develop into a quality starter.

3. Outside linebacker. Sam Cowart could be a cap casualty—if so, the team likely will re-sign unrestricted free agent James Darling, who is capable of starting—and Mo Lewis, who has lost a step, could be released. Even if the Jets restructure the contracts of Cowart and Lewis and bring both players back, they definitely will need to draft a linebacker with the range to make plays from sideline to sideline. Georgia's Boss Bailey would be the ideal choice if he still is around at the 22nd pick. If not, TCU's LaMarcus McDonald will be a quality second-round choice and Oregon State's Nick Barnett will be a good value in the third round.

4. Fullback. Backup Jerald Sowell, an unrestricted free agent, provides great depth and is an excellent special teams player. If he signs elsewhere, the Jets will need to replace him with a fullback who has the power to complement Richie Anderson. Wake Forest's Ovie Mughelli, Boston College's J.P. Comella and Maryland's James Lynch are projected mid- to late-round picks who fit the mold.

5. Free safety. After consecutive subpar seasons, Damien Robinson is a likely cap casualty. Jon McGraw is expected to replace him, and Jamie Henderson has moved from corner to safety to improve depth. But Henderson will need time to adjust, and McGraw could struggle in his first year as a starter. The Jets can sign a midlevel free agent or draft a safety such as Utah's Antwoine Sanders, Cal's Nnamdi Asomugha or Louisville's Anthony Floyd in the middle rounds—someone with the range to excel in the cover 2 scheme.

6. Kicker. Free agent John Hall is expected to leave. The Jets probably will sign a free agent to challenge for the job in training camp and may also use a draft pick to find a kicker. Tulane's Seth Marler and Cincinnati's Jonathan Ruffin were consistent at the college level and should be available late.

7. Wide receiver. The Jets have three productive receivers in Laveranues Coles, Wayne Chrebet and Santana Moss, but they're all undersized. New York needs a receiver who has the combination of size and strength to get open in the red zone and make tough catches over the middle. It's unlikely that player will make a significant impact next year, so the team can afford to wait until the later rounds to draft a developmental receiver. Though Missouri's Justin Gage, San Diego State's Kassim Osgood and Washington State's Mike Bush lack great speed, they have the combination of size and possession skills this unit lacks. With improved technique, each could become a significant contributor.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Chad Pennington	LE	■ Shaun Ellis
	❑ Vinny Testaverde		❑ Steve White
FB	■ Richie Anderson	LT	■ Josh Evans
	❑ Jerald Sowell		❑ Alan Harper
RB	● Curtis Martin	NT	■ Jason Ferguson
	■ LaMont Jordan		❑ James Reed
WR	● Laveranues Coles	RE	● John Abraham
	❑ Kevin Swayne		❑ Bryan Thomas
WR	■ Wayne Chrebet	SLB	■ Mo Lewis
	■ Santana Moss		❑ Jason Glenn
TE	■ Anthony Becht	MLB	■ Marvin Jones
	❑ Chris Baker		❑ Kelvin Moses
LT	■ Jason Fabini	WLB	■ Sam Cowart
	❑ Chris Smith		❑ James Darling
LG	■ Dave Szott	LCB	■ Donnie Abraham
	❑ J.P. Machado		■ Ray Mickens
C	● Kevin Mawae	SS	■ Sam Garnes
	❑ J.P. Machado		❑ Nick Ferguson
RG	❑ Jonathan Goodwin	FS	■ Jon McGraw
	❑ J.P. Machado		❑ Jamie Henderson
RT	■ Kareem McKenzie	RCB	■ Aaron Beasley
	■ Jason Fabini		❑ Andrew Davison
K	■ John Hall	P	■ Matt Turk

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

The Jets have done a fine job of drafting and developing talent. However, they will be put to the test in the first round of this year's draft: It won't be easy to find the right match between need and value with the 22nd pick. The Jets would like to find a defensive tackle or outside linebacker with their first pick, but there's a good chance the top six defensive tackles and Bailey, the only outside linebacker worth drafting in the first round, will be gone when it is their turn to select. If that is the case, the team could go after Ohio State safety Mike Doss with its first pick, draft a defensive tackle such as Eason with its second pick and then focus on an outside linebacker such as Barnett, who eventually could take over for the aging Lewis, with its third and final pick on Day 1. The Jets have unusually clear Day 2 needs: depth at guard if they don't bring in a free agent to take over ahead of Goodwin; a receiver with good size; a kicker to compete for the starting job; and an isolation blocker at fullback.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY A-

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	12	8	8	6	5
Starters	1	1	5	1	0
Backups	0	1	0	4	5
Other teams	2	3	1	1	0
Out of NFL	9	3	2	0	0

With QB Chad Pennington moving into the starting lineup last year, all four of the Jets' first-round picks from 2000 are now starting, and third-round pick Laveranues Coles has become one of the most explosive receivers in the league. New York also used 10 picks on the offensive line since '98 to improve its depth. The result has been a strong unit despite the loss of some key players.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

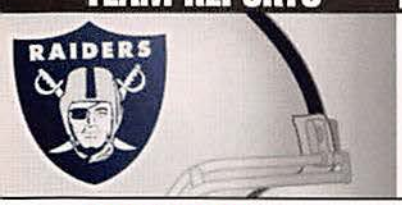
1. Bryan Thomas, DE (15/0) Was a huge disappointment. Didn't show enough burst or pass-rushing skills as a speed rusher

2. Jon McGraw, S (15/1) Backing up Damien Robinson for now. Has the tools to start down the road—possibly in 2003.

3. Chris Baker, TE (12/1) Backed up Anthony Becht. Has pass-catching ability but may never be a starter because of marginal blocking skills.

4. Alan Harper, DT (0/0) Wasn't active for any games. Is a small but quick tackle who must stay healthy and show vast improvement to make team.

5. Jonathan Goodwin, G (13/0) Jets believe he can start, but he wasn't ready last season and might need another full year of development.



OAKLAND RAIDERS

Tony Bryant

JOHN CORDES FOR TSN

Team needs

1. Defensive end. Injuries forced Tony Bryant, Trace Armstrong and Regan Upshaw to miss time last year, and Bryant still hasn't been cleared to play. Armstrong, 37, is more of a situational pass rusher than a starter at this point in his career. The team needs a defensive end who can replace Bryant if he's unable to return. Nebraska's Chris Kelsay, Texas' Cory Redding and Colorado's Tyler Brayton are projected early-round picks with the size and athletic ability to fit the bill.

2. Guard. The team could lose unrestricted free agent Mo Collins because of salary-cap problems. Backup Brad Badger also is an unrestricted free agent who may not return, so depth must be addressed. The team could replace Collins with reserve Matt Stinchcomb, but Stinchcomb lacks lower-body strength and has had injury problems. Texas' Derrick Dockery, Southern Mississippi's Torrin Tucker and Texas A&M's Taylor Whitley are excellent run blockers who should develop into quality starters.

3. Defensive tackle. The Raiders most likely will release Sam Adams. Backup Rod Coleman had a breakout season rushing the passer last year but is undersized, and Junior Ioane is too inconsistent. The team needs a two-gap defensive tackle who can draw double-teams away from John Parrella and help keep blockers off of the linebackers. Texas A&M's Ty Warren, Alabama's Jarret Johnson and Penn State's Anthony Adams are first-day prospects who could make an immediate impact against the run.

4. Wide receiver. With Jerry Rice turning 41 and Tim Brown 37 this year, the team must infuse youth into this unit. It should add a possession receiver with the size and hands to eventually complement Jerry Porter's vertical speed. Nevada's Nate Burleson, Missouri's Justin Gage and Virginia's Billy McMullen are projected middle-round picks with the physical skills to become productive No. 2 receivers.

5. Running back. Backup Tyrone Wheatley is an unrestricted free agent and could sign with a team that can offer him more touches. Charlie Garner is a great fit for this scheme, but he's undersized, making durability a concern. Kentucky's Artose Pinner, LSU's LaBrandon Toefield and Middle Tennessee's Dwone Hicks are projected middle-round picks who have the size to carry the load and enough receiving skills to be productive in a pass-heavy offense.

6. Outside linebacker. Bill Romanowski will turn 37 this offseason, and there isn't a player on the roster ready to replace him. The team must start grooming someone with the speed and athletic ability to eventually take over. Vanderbilt's Hunter Hillenmeyer, Texas A&M's Jarrod Penright and Fresno State's Sam Williams are considered projects, but they have the natural skills to develop into starters and should be around on Day 2.

7. Fullback. The Raiders probably will re-sign backup Zack Crockett, but the emergence of Porter last year caused them to run more three-receiver sets, diminishing the role of the fullback. Thus, the team likely will fill other needs before attempting to re-sign free-agent starter Jon Ritchie. If Ritchie doesn't return, the Raiders could use a late-round pick on a fullback such as Western Kentucky's Jeremi Johnson or Boston College's J.P. Comella to provide depth.

8. Center. It's unknown if Pro Bowl selection Barret Robbins will return. Backup Adam Treu has some starting experience, but the team must prepare for Robbins' possible departure. Northwestern's Austin King, Mississippi's Ben Claxton and Maryland's Todd Wike have the potential to become quality backups and should be available late in the draft.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	● Rich Gannon	LE	❑ DeLawrence Grant
	❑ Marques Tuiasosopo		❑ Trace Armstrong
FB	■ Jon Ritchie	LT	■ Sam Adams
	❑ Zack Crockett		❑ Rod Coleman
RB	● Charlie Garner	RT	■ John Parrella
	❑ Tyrone Wheatley		❑ Darrell Russell
WR	■ Jerry Porter	RE	■ Tony Bryant
	■ Tim Brown		❑ Regan Upshaw
WR	■ Jerry Rice	SLB	■ Bill Romanowski
	❑ Marcus Knight		❑ Travian Smith
TE	❑ Roland Williams	MLB	■ Napoleon Harris
	■ Doug Jolley		❑ Travian Smith
LT	■ Barry Sims	WLB	■ Eric Barton
	■ Langston Walker		❑ Eric Johnson
LG	■ Frank Middleton	LCB	● Charles Woodson
	■ Matt Stinchcomb		❑ Terrance Shaw
C	■ Barret Robbins	SS	❑ Anthony Dorsett
	■ Adam Treu		❑ Derrick Gibson
RG	■ Mo Collins	FS	■ Rod Woodson
	❑ Chad Slaughter		❑ Eric Johnson
RT	● Lincoln Kennedy	RCB	■ Phillip Buchanon
	■ Langston Walker		■ Tory James
K	■ Sebastian Janikowski	P	● Shane Lechler

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B-

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	9	7	6	7	8
Starters	3	2	2	1	2
Backups	1	2	3	3	5
Other teams	1	2	0	3	1
Out of NFL	4	1	1	0	0

Oakland had a strong 2002 draft and has built one of the best offensive lines in the league. The Raiders also did well to draft DE Roderick Coleman and LB Eric Barton in the fifth round in 1999. However, '99 first-round OT Matt Stinchcomb remains a reserve, and Oakland's decision to use two picks on kickers in 2000 with salary-cap issues looming could come back to hurt it.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1a. Phillip Buchanon, CB (6/2) Displayed his game-breaking ability in coverage and as a returner before an injury cut his season short.

1b. Napoleon Harris, LB (15/13) Moved into the middle and made the Raiders comfortable enough to let Greg Biekert go.

2a. Langston Walker, OT (12/2) A monster at 6-8, 345. Is backing up Lincoln Kennedy for now.

2b. Doug Jolley, TE (16/3) Had some big games toward the end of the season. Should push for a starting job in 2003.

5. Kenyon Coleman, DE (1/0) Backed up the aging Trace Armstrong. Could be a starter in the future.

6a. Keyon Nash, DB (0/0) Developmental prospect with nice size. Currently on the practice squad.

6b. Larry Ned, RB (0/0) Cut; signed by the Vikings.

7. Ronald Curry, QB (1/0) Played a little as a returner. Needs a position besides quarterback.

The outlook

The trade that sent coach Jon Gruden to the Buccaneers will provide a second first-round pick in this year's draft. The Raiders could go in a variety of directions with the final two picks in the first round. They always are interested in making a move on the first day, and with two first-rounders, they have the leverage to do so. If they work a trade, it likely will be to draft a defensive end such as Miami's Jerome McDougle.

If they can't find the right deal, they will wait to see which players fall to them at picks 31 and 32. There, the team could draft a defensive end such as Redding, a receiver such as Florida State's Anquan Boldin, a running back such as Virginia Tech's Lee Suggs, a defensive tackle such as Ohio State's Kenny Peterson or even the top center prospect, Notre Dame's Jeff Faine.

Guard, outside linebacker and fullback are the other positions the Raiders are likely to address, but they can wait until the second day of the draft.

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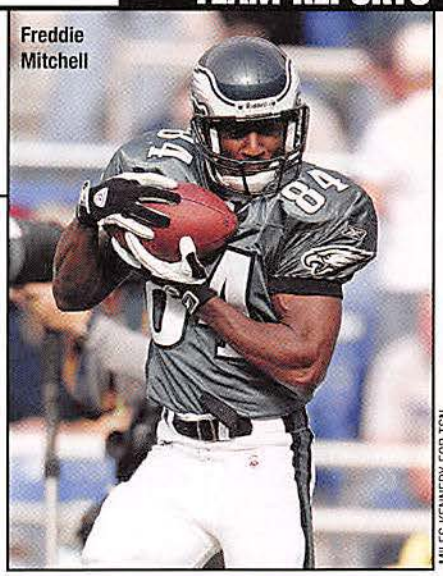
PHILADELPHIA EAGLES


Freddie Mitchell

MILES KENNEDY FOR TSN

Team needs

1. Middle linebacker. Levon Kirkland and Barry Gardner are free agents who aren't expected to return, but neither has the desired speed for the position anyway. The Eagles need a linebacker who has the range to make plays sideline-to-sideline and the strength to hold his ground at the point of attack. One option is to sign a free agent. They also could draft a top prospect such as Maryland's E.J. Henderson or Kansas State's Terry Pierce in the first round or wait a round or two and draft a player such as Texas Tech's Lawrence Flugence or Tennessee's Keyon Whiteside.

2. Defensive end. Philadelphia would like to re-sign Hugh Douglas, but he was likely to draw plenty of attention in the free-agent market. The Eagles could replace Douglas with Derrick Burgess, but Burgess lacks bulk and missed 15 games with a foot injury last year. In addition, Brandon Whiting is a much better fit as a reserve than a starter. Even if Douglas returns, the Eagles could use a replacement for Whiting. Penn State's Michael Haynes, Colorado's Tyler Brayton and Texas' Cory Redding are every-down ends who could make an immediate impact, and one of them should be available at the 30th overall pick.

3. Tight end. Though Chad Lewis has gone to two Pro Bowls, he turns 32 in October, and the Eagles should start preparing a possible replacement. The fact backup Jeff Thomason is a free agent makes the situation even more pressing. Philadelphia needs a tight end who has the speed to stretch defenses and the hands to make tough catches in traffic.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	● Donovan McNabb	LE	❑ Brandon Whiting
	❑ Koy Detmer		❑ K.D. Kalu
FB	■ Cecil Martin	LT	■ Darwin Walker
	None		❑ Paul Grasmanis
RB	■ Duce Staley	RT	■ Corey Simon
	❑ Correll Buckhalter		❑ Paul Grasmanis
WR	■ Todd Pinkston	RE	● Hugh Douglas
	❑ Freddie Mitchell		❑ K.D. Kalu
WR	■ James Thrash	SLB	■ Carlos Emmons
	■ Antonio Freeman		❑ Ike Reese
TE	■ Chad Lewis	MLB	❑ Justin Ena
	❑ Jeff Thomason		❑ Tyreo Harrison
LT	● Tra Thomas	WLB	■ Shawn Barber
	■ John Welbourn		❑ Ike Reese
LG	■ John Welbourn	LCB	● Troy Vincent
	❑ Bobbie Williams		■ Al Harris
C	■ Hank Fraley	SS	■ Michael Lewis
	❑ Scott Peters		❑ Rashard Cook
RG	■ Jermane Mayberry	FS	● Brian Dawkins
	❑ Bobbie Williams		❑ Rashard Cook
RT	■ Jon Runyan	RCB	● Bobby Taylor
	■ John Welbourn		■ Al Harris
K	● David Akers	P	❑ Sean Landeta

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

4. Weakside linebacker. Shawn Barber is a free agent who isn't a lock to return. There isn't a player on the roster capable of replacing Barber. So look for the team to sign Barber or another free agent, then use the draft to improve its depth. Georgia's Chris Clemons, Hawaii's Pisa Tinoisamoa and Tennessee's Eddie Moore have the combination of athletic ability and speed to develop into productive starters on the weak side.

5. Wide receiver. With Freddie Mitchell continuing to struggle, Antonio Freeman a free agent and Freddie Milons coming off a broken leg, the Eagles need a receiver who can make an immediate impact in their multiple-receiver sets and eventually challenge for the No. 2 spot opposite James Thrash. Last year's No. 2, Todd Pinkston, probably is a better fit as the third receiver. Nevada's Nate Burleson, Arizona State's Shaun McDonald and USC's Kareem Kelly have the skills to excel in the West Coast scheme.

6. Punter. Sean Landeta, 41, is a free agent who missed four games last season with a torn calf muscle. His replacement, Lee Johnson, was just adequate—and is even older. Though the Eagles likely will sign a free agent, they could use a late-round pick on a young leg. Hawaii's Mat McBriar, Maryland's Brooks Barnard and Ohio State's Andy Groom are three of the top punters on the board.

7. Running back. This is a deep unit, but that could change quickly. Backup Dorsey Levens probably will leave as a free agent, and Brian Mitchell also could leave. Look for Correll Buckhalter and Brian Westbrook to play behind Duce Staley. However, Buckhalter and Westbrook have had injury problems, so the Eagles may want to add another back. LSU's Domanick Davis and Oklahoma's Quentin Griffin are projected middle-round selections who could provide adequate depth and help in the return game.

The outlook

Although he consults with others first, coach Andy Reid has the final say on draft day. Reid and the Eagles haven't always found the right players, but they do as good a job as any team at recognizing and addressing needs.

This year, the defensive line and the inside and weakside linebacker positions will get lots of attention. The draft is loaded with defensive-line talent, but there might not be a good value left at end when the team picks at No. 30. It would make sense if the Eagles took a top inside linebacker such as Pierce late in Round 1, then went after an end such as Louisville's Dewayne White or Florida's Clint Mitchell late in the second round.

If the Eagles can't re-sign Barber, they will be forced to use a Day 1 selection on a weakside 'backer. If Barber returns, it would make sense for them to draft an athletic, developmental tight end such as Joppru or Walker in the third round. Depending on what happens in the free-agent market, the team could spend a Day 2 pick on a running back. It also could add a wide receiver early on Day 2, then turn its attention back to the defensive line and linebacker.

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	8	10	7	6	8
Starters	2	3	2	0	0
Backups	1	3	1	4	7
Other teams	3	2	0	2	1
Out of NFL	2	2	4	0	0

1999 first-round pick Donovan McNabb is one of the game's elite quarterbacks. The team improved its depth in 2001, but first-round WR Freddie Mitchell has been a disappointment and second-round LB Quinton Caver was released. The Eagles used their top three picks last year on defensive backs even though they had a deep secondary and had more pressing needs at linebacker and defensive end.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Lito Sheppard, CB (12/0) Spent his rookie season behind the team's strong veteran corners but is a future starter himself. Is a tremendous athlete.

2a. Michael Lewis, S (14/4) Is the eventual replacement for Blaine Bishop at SS. Excels against the run and is a strong special teams contributor.

2b. Sheldon Brown, CB (16/0) Didn't play much as a rookie; should develop into a quality nickel corner.

3. Brian Westbrook, RB (15/3) Provides nice depth behind Duce Staley and eventually should replace Brian Mitchell as the return specialist.

4. Scott Peters, C (0/0) Backed up starter Hank Fraley last year and should fill the same role in '03.

5. Freddie Milons, WR (0/0) Is the team's No. 5 receiver. His future is most likely as a reserve slot receiver and special teams contributor.

6. Tyreo Harrison, LB (2/0) Contributed some on special teams but must improve his linebacker skills to make the team next season as a reserve.

7. Raheem Brock, DE (13/6*) Cut; now with Colts.

**Games played with another NFL team*

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Team needs

1. Cornerback. Despite finishing third in the league in sacks last year, Pittsburgh finished 20th in pass defense because the cornerbacks gave up too many big plays. Chad Scott and Dewayne Washington should return. But Scott's interceptions dropped from five in both 2000 and 2001 to two last season, and Washington made too many mistakes for a nine-year veteran. The Steelers need a shutdown corner who can replace Washington and bring needed speed to this unit. Washington State's Marcus Trufant and Oklahoma's Andre Woolfolk, both projected as first-round picks, are fast enough to stay with premier vertical receivers and have the ball skills to provide big plays. But both might be gone when the Steelers draft at No. 27.

2. Safety. Strong safety Lee Flowers, an unrestricted free agent, probably won't be back, and free safety Brent Alexander struggled last year. So Pittsburgh could have two new starting safeties. Chris Hope is expected to replace Flowers. Although Hope isn't the physical run-stuffer Flowers is, he shows great range in coverage and should help improve the pass defense. Mike Logan will provide adequate depth at both safety positions, but he's somewhat of a liability in coverage and had offseason knee surgery. The Steelers need a safety who has the cover skills to push Alexander and improve the depth. Ohio State's Mike Doss has the speed and athletic ability to fill this need.

3. Tight end. Mark Bruener has sustained a season-ending injury in three of the last four years, and all four reserves are unrestricted free agents. Pittsburgh probably will re-sign backup Jerame Tuman because of Bruener's durability concerns, but neither Bruener nor Tuman is an explosive receiver. Projected middle-round picks Bennie Joppru of Michigan and Aaron Walker of Florida have the speed to stretch defenses and the reliable hands to make tough catches in traffic.

4. Quarterback. Kordell Stewart will be released, and Charlie Batch is an unrestricted free agent who would like to be a starter again. Batch still could return to play behind Tommy Maddox. If not, a veteran will be signed to be the primary backup. Pittsburgh already has signed Tim Levcik, who was cut by the Dolphins last year, to compete for the No. 3 spot. The Steelers still should use a late-round pick on a developmental quarterback who can push Levcik in training camp. Eastern Illinois' Tony Romo and Portland State's Juston Wood are possibilities.

5. Offensive tackle. Free-agent left tackle Wayne Gandy will draw attention from several teams and likely will be too expensive to retain. John Jackson retired, which hurts depth, and Oliver Ross and Mathias Nkwenti might not be consistent enough in pass protection. The team probably won't draft a premier left tackle with more pressing needs elsewhere, so look for it to bring in a free agent should Gandy leave. The Steelers then can draft an athletic tackle to provide adequate depth, allowing Nkwenti to move to the right side or inside, where he is better suited. Hawaii's Wayne Hunter and Memphis' Wade Smith are projected as middle-round picks, and they have a good combination of athleticism and technique.

6. Running back. Jerome Bettis, who missed eight games in the last two years because of injury, could be released. Even if he returns, it should be as the backup to Amos Zereoue, who is a better fit in this offense because of his speed and his production as a receiver. No. 3 Chris Fuamatu-Ma'afala will return but, like Bettis, he's a power back with durability concerns. The Steelers need a back with explosiveness and receiving skills, someone who can contribute on third down and help keep Zereoue fresh. LSU's Domanick Davis and USC's Sultan McCullough fit this mold, and they should be available late.

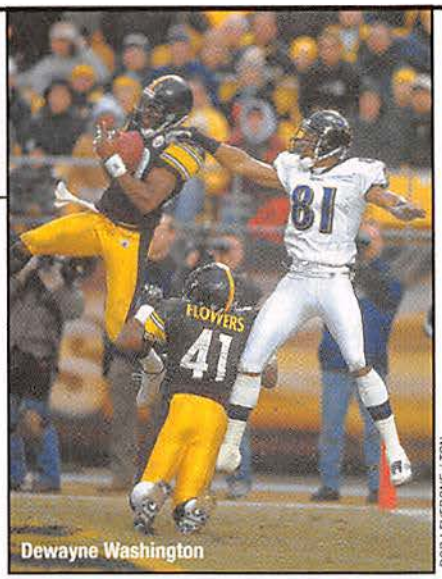
PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Tommy Maddox	LE	■ Aaron Smith
	❑ Charlie Batch		❑ Brett Keisel
FB	■ Dan Krieder	NT	● Casey Hampton
	❑ Verron Haynes		■ Kendrick Clancy
RB	■ Amos Zereoue	RE	■ Kimo von Oelhoffen
	■ Jerome Bettis		❑ Rodney Bailey
WR	● Hines Ward	LOLB	● Jason Gildon
	■ Antwaan Randle El		❑ Justin Kurpeikis
WR	● Plaxico Burress	LILB	■ James Farrior
	❑ Terance Mathis		❑ John Fiala
TE	■ Mark Bruener	RILB	● Kendrell Bell
	❑ Jerame Tuman		❑ Larry Foote
LT	❑ Oliver Ross	ROLB	● Joey Porter
	❑ Mathias Nkwenti		❑ Clark Haggans
LG	● Alan Faneca	LCB	■ Chad Scott
	❑ Chukky Okobi		❑ Deshea Townsend
C	■ Jeff Hartings	SS	■ Chris Hope
	❑ Chukky Okobi		❑ Mike Logan
RG	■ Kendall Simmons	FS	❑ Brent Alexander
	❑ Keydrick Vincent		❑ Mike Logan
RT	■ Marvel Smith	RCB	■ Dewayne Washington
	❑ Josh Burr		❑ Hank Poteat
K	❑ Jeff Reed	P	■ Josh Miller

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Director of football operations Kevin Colbert and coach Bill Cowher are the main decision-makers in a stable, consistent and successful war room. The Steelers have fewer needs than most teams, but they have more weaknesses than a year ago, especially in the secondary. Depending on what happens with free agents, there's a good chance the team will use two of its Day 1 picks on defensive backs.



Dewayne Washington

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	10	11	9	7	8
Starters	2	2	2	2	1
Backups	2	2	3	3	6
Other teams	1	3	3	1	1
Out of NFL	5	4	1	1	0

The Steelers have failed to draft a shutdown corner and 1999 first-round WR Troy Edwards was a disappointment, but four of the team's last five first-round picks became starters almost immediately. In the last three years, the second-round picks also have made significant impacts. LB Joey Porter and WR Hines Ward, both third-round picks in their respective drafts, have been picked to the Pro Bowl.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Kendall Simmons, OT (14/14) A powerful run blocker who started at right guard. Must improve his pass-blocking skills.

2. Antwaan Randle El, WR (16/0) Another "Slash" who showed big-play potential as a returner, slot receiver and occasional passer.

3. Chris Hope, S (14/0) Could become the starter at strong safety next season. Has better potential in coverage than Lee Flowers but is not as physical.

4. Larry Foote, LB (14/4) Provided depth behind Kendrell Bell. Is a good athlete who must improve his size and strength.

5. Verron Haynes, RB (14/0) A bit of a misfit in the Steelers' offense. Is a similar player to Chris Fuamatu-Ma'afala.

6. Lee Mays, WR (16/0) Returned kickoffs and served as team's No. 5 WR. Showed some upside.

7a. LaVar Glover, CB (2/0*) Cut; signed by Bengals.

7b. Brett Keisel, DE (5/0) Backed up Aaron Smith at LDE. Has size but must play with better leverage.

**Games played with another NFL team*

Assuming the top three corners—Terence Newman, Trufant and Woolfolk—are gone by the 27th pick, the team could go with a safety such as Doss or USC's Troy Polamalu. The Steelers then could look for a corner to fall to them in the second round. If that doesn't happen, they could fill their need for a pass-catching tight end. On Day 2, the team must address depth at tackle and quarterback and add a rush linebacker who can contribute on special teams.

ST. LOUIS RAMS

Team needs

1. Right offensive tackle. Adam Timmerman started three games at tackle last season but is expected to stay at guard. John St. Clair will return, but he struggled with quicker edge rushers and may be a better fit as a reserve. A season-ending ankle and leg injury to backup Grant Williams also is a concern. No team attempted more passes per game last year, so the Rams need a right tackle with the lateral mobility to hold up in pass protection as well as the power to get movement in the running game. Stanford's Kwame Harris would be a good fit. Another possibility is Iowa's Eric Steinbach, who played guard in college but could move to tackle in the NFL.

2. Cornerback. Aeneas Williams' return is questionable; he may retire or be released if he doesn't restructure his contract. If he returns, he may move to safety. The team wants to re-sign Dre' Bly, but he could be too expensive to retain. Dexter McCleon lost his starting job last year, and the team should be hesitant to start him again. St. Louis could fill this need with a free agent if Bly leaves, and then draft a corner who can play in the nickel package. Texas A&M's Sammy Davis, Notre Dame's Shane Walton and UCLA's Ricky Manning would be good fits in the cover 2 scheme.

3. Middle linebacker. Jamie Duncan failed to replace London Fletcher's production and could be replaced as the starter. Coordinator Lovie Smith's schemes are predicated on speed, and the team needs an athletic middle linebacker who shows great range against both the run and the pass. Given the struggles of Duncan, the team will be hesitant to bring in another free agent, so it likely will use an early-round draft pick. Second-round prospects Terry Pierce (Kansas State) and Gerald Hayes (Pittsburgh) are candidates.

4. Wide receiver. Terrence Wilkins was a disappointment and probably will be released. Isaac Bruce and Torry Holt will return, but Ricky Proehl turns 35 this offseason and may retire, so depth is needed. The team needs a receiver capable of contributing in its multiple-receiver sets and be an explosive return man. Projected mid-round picks such as Arizona State's Shaun McDonald, USC's Kareem Kelly and Utah State's Kevin Curtis lack ideal size, but they have the burst to be productive working out of the slot and have experience returning kicks.

5. Guard. Although Timmerman will return, Tom Nutten, Heath Irwin and Frank Garcia all are unrestricted free agents. All four will be 30 or older, and Nutten missed the last five games with an ankle injury. The team probably will re-sign Nutten and could move St. Clair inside in an emergency, but it must infuse youth while adding depth because it's unlikely either Garcia or Irwin will be back. Texas A&M's Taylor Whitley, Illinois' David Diehl and Penn State's Gus Felder are projected middle-round picks who have the size and power to develop into starters with improved technique.

6. Outside linebacker. St. Louis was forced to run a 4-1-6 scheme midway through last season because of the poor play of the linebackers and Robert Thomas' disappointing rookie season. Tommy Polley is a playmaker, but he missed four games with injuries, and backups Don Davis and O.J. Brigance are unrestricted free agents. The Rams could bring in a versatile veteran to provide depth behind Polley and replace Thomas should he continue to have problems. They also should draft a developmental linebacker who flashes the potential to be a quality reserve. Tennessee's Eddie Moore, Ohio State's Cie Grant and Mars Hill's Khalid Abdullah are projected middle- to late-round picks who fit this mold.

7. Tight end. Productive Ernie Conwell probably will re-sign. Backup Brandon Manumaleuna is a good in-line blocker and an excellent complement to Conwell. But the team lacks a receiving tight end who has the speed to stretch defenses or the burst after the catch to turn the short gain into the big play. Rutgers' L.J. Smith and St. Cloud State's Matt Huebner have the athletic ability and explosiveness the team lacks and both should be around late in the draft.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

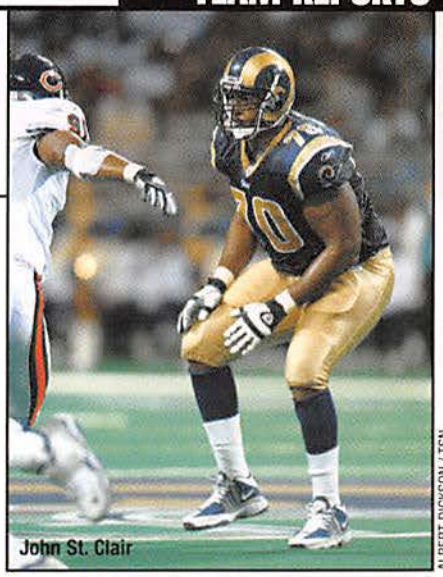
	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Kurt Warner	LE	● Leonard Little
	■ Marc Bulger		■ Brian Young
FB	■ James Hodgins	LT	■ Ryan Pickett
	❑ Chris Massey		■ Brian Young
RB	● Marshall Faulk	RT	■ Jeff Zgonina
	❑ Lamar Gordon		■ Damione Lewis
WR	● Isaac Bruce	RE	■ Grant Wistrom
	❑ Ricky Proehl		■ Damione Lewis
WR	● Torry Holt	SLB	❑ Robert Thomas
	❑ Troy Edwards		❑ Don Davis
TE	■ Ernie Conwell	MLB	❑ Jamie Duncan
	❑ Brandon Manumaleuna		❑ Don Davis
LT	● Orlando Pace	WLB	■ Tommy Polley
	❑ John St. Clair		❑ Courtland Bullard
LG	■ Tom Nutten	LCB	■ Aeneas Williams
	❑ Heath Irwin		❑ Travis Fisher
C	■ Andy McCollum	SS	■ Adam Archuleta
	❑ Frank Garcia		❑ Nick Sorensen
RG	● Adam Timmerman	FS	■ Kim Herring
	❑ Frank Garcia		❑ Chad Cota
RT	❑ John St. Clair	RCB	■ Dre' Bly
	❑ Grant Williams		❑ Dexter McCleon
K	■ Jeff Wilkins	P	■ Mitch Berger

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

As coach Mike Martz has gotten more control in the war room, the Rams have become less successful on draft day. With pressing needs and some salary-cap problems on the horizon, the pressure is on Martz and G.M. Charley Armey to find good value at key positions. For starters, the Rams need to address the hole at right tackle and can't go wrong with Harris or Steinbach, one of whom should be available when the team picks 12th.

With two more picks on Day 1, the team will need to find the best two available players at cornerback, wide receiver or middle linebacker. Whichever of the four above positions they don't address on Day 1 will become a priority in the fourth round. The team should add depth along the offensive line and at linebacker on Day 2.


John St. Clair

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C-

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	8	7	7	9	8
Starters	2	2	1	3	0
Backups	0	0	2	3	7
Other teams	3	4	3	3	0
Out of NFL	3	1	1	0	1

St. Louis had a strong 1998 draft, 2001 first-round SS Adam Archuleta has been steady and 2001 first-round DT Ryan Pickett showed improvement last year. But three of the team's last five first-round picks have been disappointments. The Rams also have six offensive linemen who are unrestricted free agents this year, yet the team picked only two offensive linemen in the past two drafts.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Robert Thomas, LB (16/10) Started 10 games in 2002. Must add strength and improve recognition skills but will be the strongside starter next season.

2. Travis Fisher, CB (14/11) Filled in for the injured A. Williams last season and likely will start opposite him this season. Is best suited to be a nickel back.

3a. Lamar Gordon, RB (13/5) Did not show much when he played. Is not a great fit for Rams offense.

3b. Eric Crouch, WR (0/0) Retired from football.

4. Travis Scott, G (0/0) A curious pick who is nothing more than a developmental guard who will serve as a reserve if he makes the team in '03.

5. Courtland Bullard, LB (11/1) Nothing more than a reserve linebacker and special teams contributor.

6. Steve Bellisari, DB (0/0) Struggling to make transition from college quarterback to NFL free safety.

7. Chris Massey, C (16/1) Did a fine job as the long snapper and should keep the job in 2003.

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

Team needs

1. Wide receiver. With the team expected to release Curtis Conway, it needs a No. 1 wideout. Tim Dwight is a complementary receiver, and the team's other wideouts are basically untested. Florida's Taylor Jacobs and Florida State's Anquan Boldin are possibilities in the middle of the first round, and Tennessee's Kelley Washington and Stanford's Teyo Johnson are good second-round values.

2. Safety. Neither strong safety Rodney Harrison nor free safety Keith Lyle, a free agent, is expected back. The team likely will move cornerback Ryan McNeal to free safety and try to fill its need at strong safety in the free-agent market or the draft. Arkansas' Ken Hamlin and Florida's Todd Johnson are projected early-round picks who have the versatility to play both safety positions.

3. Cornerback. The lack of speed at corner forced San Diego to play conservative cover 2 schemes last season. Quentin Jammer, who started four games as a rookie last year, is expected to start at one spot in 2003. The other spot may have to be filled by a free agent or a draft pick. Texas' Roderick Babers, SMU's Kevin Garrett and UCLA's Ricky Manning would be good fits, and one of them could slip to the middle rounds.

4. Defensive tackle. Jamal Williams is the team's best interior run stuffer, but he has had injury problems. The Chargers need a two-gap defensive tackle who can keep blockers off the linebackers and collapse the pocket as a pass rusher. If the team decides to address the position in the first round, Georgia's Johnathan Sullivan, Miami's William Joseph and Kentucky's Dewayne Robertson have the combination of size and power to make an impact.

5. Guard. Though Toniu Fonoti should become an excellent starter, he struggled in pass protection last year. San Diego would be wise to sign a veteran free agent to provide depth and act as a mentor. The club also needs a guard who can push Jason Ball or Kelvin Garmon for playing time and provide depth. Hawaii's Vince Manuwai, Southern Mississippi's Torrin Tucker and Virginia Tech's Anthony Davis are Day 1 prospects who have the skills to develop into starters.

6. Offensive tackle. The Chargers could sign a versatile veteran to provide depth at both tackle positions. They also take a look at Stanford's Kwame Harris if he slides to them in Round 1. The odds are they will draft a developmental player who flashes the potential to develop into an effective starter. Arkansas State's Garry Johnson, Texas' Robbie Doane or Clemson's Derrick Brantley would be a good fit.

7. Tight end. The offense is run-heavy, and neither Stephen Alexander nor Justin Peelle is a dominant run blocker. San Diego needs a massive tight end who can get movement in the running game. Central Florida's Michael Gaines and Nebraska's Aaron Golliday play like tackles and should be available late.

8. Kicker. The Chargers released kickoff specialist Wade Richey, and free agent Steve Christie no longer has great leg strength. The team won't use two roster spots on kickers again, so it will sign one who can handle field-goal attempts and kickoffs. The Chargers likely will bring in a free agent to compete for the job,but they also could use a late-round pick on a kicker. Tulane's Seth Marler, Cincinnati's Jonathan Ruffin, and Miami's Todd Sievers are three of the best available.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Drew Brees	LE	■ Marcellus Wiley
	❑ Doug Flutie		❑ Adrian Dingle
FB	■ Fred McCrary	LT	■ Jamal Williams
	❑ Joey Goodspeed		❑ Leonardo Carson
RB	● LaDainian Tomlinson	RT	■ Jason Fisk
	❑ Jesse Chatman		❑ DeQuincy Scott
WR	❑ Tim Dwight	RE	■ Raylee Johnson
	❑ Eric Parker		❑ Adrian Dingle
WR	❑ Reche Caldwell	SLB	■ Ben Leber
	❑ Eric Parker		❑ Carlos Polk
TE	■ Stephen Alexander	MLB	● Donnie Edwards
	❑ Justin Peelle		❑ Carlos Polk
LT	■ Damion McIntosh	WLB	■ Junior Seau
	❑ Sammy Williams		❑ Zeke Moreno
LG	❑ Jason Ball	LCB	■ Ryan McNeil
	❑ Kelvin Garmon		❑ Tay Cody
C	■ Cory Raymer	SS	■ Rodney Harrison
	❑ Jason Ball		❑ Rogers Beckett
RG	■ Toniu Fonoti	FS	❑ Keith Lyle
	❑ Michael Keathley		❑ Rogers Beckett
RT	■ Vaughn Parker	RCB	■ Quentin Jammer
	❑ Ed Ellis		❑ Alex Molden
K	❑ Steve Christie	P	■ Darren Bennett

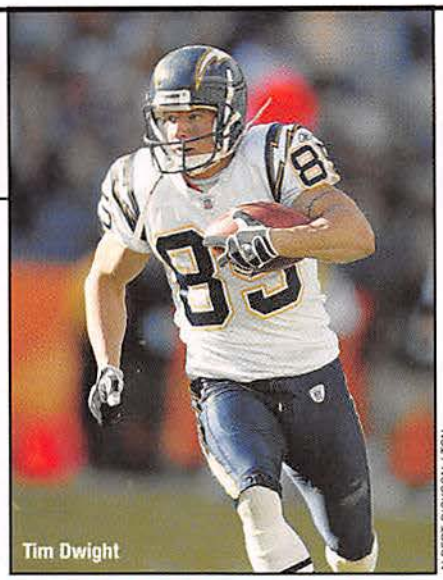
● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Wide receiver is the need that stands out. But the difficult decision general manager John Butler, personnel director A.J. Smith and the Chargers have to make with the 15th pick is whether to reach for a receiver of lesser value or to draft better value at a different position. After Michigan State's Charles Rogers and Miami's Andre Johnson are taken in the top 10 picks, there isn't a receiver worth drafting until late in the round. The team will entertain options to trade down and stockpile picks, but don't expect it to give away picks to move up for Johnson.

Because the defensive tackle position is so deep and the Chargers clearly need help there, it makes the most sense for them to go with a player such as Sullivan in the first round, then focus on receiver in the second or third round. The club could get a defensive tackle early, an upper-echelon tackle or guard in the second round and a quality receiver such as Virginia's Billy McMullen or San Diego State's Kassim Osgood in the third round.

On Day 2, a kicker is needed, and if the team wants to find a new leg in the draft, it will have to use a fifth- or sixth-round pick on a top player such as Marler. The Chargers need to spend a pick early on Day 2 on a cornerback with developmental skills. They also will need to work on adding depth in the offensive line and on trying to find a sleeper with good versatility at safety.



Tim Dwight

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	6	6	8	8	8
Starters	0	0	2	2	2
Backups	0	1	1	3	5
Other teams	1	2	3	1	1
Out of NFL	5	3	2	2	0

The Chargers drafted terribly from 1998 to 2000, but G.M. John Butler has done an excellent job since taking over in 2001. His first pick, first-round RB LaDainian Tomlinson, finished second in the league in rushing last year, and 2002 first-round CB Quentin Jammer—whose progress was slowed by a lengthy holdout last season—is expected to improve a struggling pass defense.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Quentin Jammer, CB (14/4) A bit of a disappointment as a rookie; didn't make first start until Week 13. Had difficulty in coverage.

2a. Toniu Fonoti, G (15/14) Started 14 games at right guard and helped open holes for 1,683-yard rusher LaDainian Tomlinson.

2b. Reche Caldwell, WR (16/2) Might never be anything more than a No. 3 receiver but could be a consistent, move-the-chains target if the Chargers had solid No. 1 and No. 2 receivers around him.

3. Ben Leber, LB (16/14) Secured the starting spot at strongside linebacker in training camp.

4. Justin Peelle, TE (15/2) Backed up Stephen Alexander but caught just three passes.

5. Terry Charles, WR (0/0) A project with intriguing size (6-3, 197) who did not play as rookie.

6. Matt Anderle, OT (0/0) Cut; now with Indianapolis, already his fourth NFL team.

7. Seth Burford, QB (0/0) Developmental prospect with a strong arm who needs a lot of polishing.

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SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. Bryant Young went to the Pro Bowl and Dana Stubblefield is a solid force, but both players are on the downside of their careers. Age is an issue for most of the team's other defensive tackles, too, and the team could use more bulk. The run defense allowed 4.2 yards per carry last season, so it could benefit from a massive two-gap tackle to clog the middle against the run and collapse the pocket against the pass. The team hopes Oklahoma State's Kevin Williams or Georgia's Johnathan Sullivan slips to the 26th pick, but that is unlikely. The best hope is Ohio State's Kenny Peterson at that time.

2. Wide receiver. Coach Dennis Erickson wants to throw downfield more, so the team needs a receiver who can stretch defenses and open up short-to-intermediate routes for Terrell Owens. Tai Streets had a breakout season but lacks ideal speed and is a better fit as a No. 3 receiver. Erickson also runs a lot of one-back sets and some no-back sets, which means depth is needed. Illinois' Brandon Lloyd and Florida State's Anquan Boldin are late first-round candidates who could excel in the vertical passing game and push Streets for time.

3. Offensive tackle. Starters Derrick Deese and Scott Gragg are expected to return. Deese missed time with an ankle injury last year, and backup Matt Willig is an unrestricted free agent. Deese turns 33 before the season and already lacks some of the lateral mobility and initial quickness he showed earlier in his career. The team needs to add depth and groom a replacement for the future. Georgia's Jon Stinchcomb is a good fit in the second round, and Hawaii's Wayne Hunter is a solid third-round candidate

4. Defensive end. The team wants to re-sign unrestricted free agent Chike Okeafor, whose sack production improved substantially. Andre Carter continues to improve. Both players, however, are undersized, and the unit lacks depth. Backup John Engelberger plays with intensity but lacks the bulk to consistently anchor against the run and the closing speed to get to the quarterback. The team needs a power end who can replace Okeafor on running downs, keeping him fresh for passing downs. Florida's Clint Mitchell and Alabama's Kindal Moorehead both offer size and versatility.

5. Tight end. After an impressive rookie season, Eric Johnson was limited by a back injury in 2002. He is expected to return as the starter. Backup Justin Swift has potential but hasn't progressed as expected. The team needs to sign a free-agent tight end or use a middle-round pick. Arizona State's Mike Pinkard, Oklahoma's Trent Smith and Oregon's George Wrighster each has the athletic ability to provide depth and excel in this scheme.

6. Cornerback. The team expected Mike Rumph to push undersized Jason Webster for playing time last year, but Rumph struggled. Webster and Ahmed Plummer missed time with injuries. The team needs to improve depth by adding a corner who can push Rumph in camp and at least contribute in the nickel or dime packages. This need will be filled with a free agent unless a corner such as Tuskegee's Drayton Florence or Texas' Roderick Babers slips to Day 2.

7. Punter. Jason Baker had excellent leg strength but was inconsistent. He was released midway through last season. His replacement, Bill LaFleur, probably will be given a chance to compete for the job. The team signed Jeff Crowell and likely will bring in a proven veteran. It also could use a late-round pick here as well. Hawaii's Mat McBriar, Colorado's Andy Groom and Kentucky's Glenn Pakulak are three of the best available.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	● Jeff Garcia	LE	❑ Chike Okeafor
	❑ Tim Rattay		❑ John Engelberger
FB	● Fred Beasley	LT	■ Bryant Young
	❑ Terry Jackson		❑ Jim Flanigan
RB	■ Garrison Hearst	RT	■ Dana Stubblefield
	■ Kevan Barlow		❑ Jim Flanigan
WR	■ Tai Streets	RE	● Andre Carter
	❑ J.J. Stokes		❑ Sean Moran
WR	● Terrell Owens	LLB	● Julian Peterson
	❑ Cedric Wilson		❑ Saleem Rasheed
TE	■ Eric Johnson	MLB	■ Derek Smith
	❑ Justin Swift		❑ Quincy Stewart
LT	● Derrick Deese	RLB	■ Jamie Winborn
	❑ Matt Willig		■ Jeff Ulbrich
LG	❑ Eric Heitmann	LCB	■ Ahmed Plummer
	■ Dave Fiore		❑ Jimmy Williams
C	■ Jeremy Newberry	SS	■ Tony Parrish
	❑ Ben Lynch		❑ John Keith
RG	● Ron Stone	FS	■ Zack Bronson
	❑ Eric Heitmann		❑ Ronnie Heard
RT	■ Scott Gragg	RCB	■ Jason Webster
	❑ Matt Willig		❑ Mike Rumph
K	❑ Jeff Chandler	P	❑ Bill LaFleur

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

With the 26th pick, general manager Terry Donahue and the 49ers are in a tough spot. The team would like to draft one of the six blue-chip defensive tackles, but there's a better-than-even chance all six will be gone. Moving up is a possibility, but it would cost picks later on, and the team might have too many needs to be giving away picks. Assuming no defensive tackle worth drafting is available, the team could go with a wide receiver now that J.J. Stokes is unlikely to return, an offensive tackle who eventually could take over for the aging Deese or a defensive end if a player such as Penn State's Michael Haynes is available. It isn't like the 49ers to draft a receiver in the first round, but Lloyd or Boldin is likely to be their best value and could provide a vertical presence in the team's three-receiver sets.

The best available defensive tackle should be taken with the second pick, and then the team should nab a pass-rushing end such as Florida State's Alonzo Jackson in the third round. The 49ers then could draft a sleeper offensive tackle with great athleticism such as Memphis' Wade Smith with their first pick on Day 2.

Tai Streets

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	8	11	8	10
Starters	2	2	4	2	2
Backups	0	2	5	5	7
Other teams	2	4	0	0	1
Out of NFL	3	0	2	1	0

The 49ers have drafted significant contributors in FB Fred Beasley, TE Eric Johnson and G Eric Heitmann in the later rounds since 1998. But despite spending 10 picks on defensive backs over the last five years, they still finished 22nd in the league in pass defense last year. First-round CBs Ahmed Plummer (2000) and Mike Rumph ('02) gave up far too many big plays last year.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Mike Rumph, CB (16/1) Has great size but became a target as the nickel corner last season. Eventually will push No. 2 starter J. Webster to slot.

3. Saleem Rasheed, LB (6/0) Struggled with injuries last year. Will contribute on passing downs as an inside LB and on special teams in 2003.

4a. Jeff Chandler, K (6/0) Made eight of 12 field-goal attempts after taking over late in the season.

4b. Kevin Curtis, DB (0/0) Spent rookie year on I.R.

5a. Brandon Doman, QB (0/0) A good fit for 49ers' offense who has time to develop as the No. 3 man.

5b. Josh Shaw, DT (3/0) Played a bit as a wave tackle after recovering from a knee injury.

6. Mark Anelli, TE (0/0) Cut; not on an NFL roster.

7a. Eric Heitmann, G (16/12) Started 12 games at left guard because of injuries but is best suited for backup duty.

7b. Kyle Kosier, OT (15/1) Proved versatile enough to provide backup support at guard and tackle.

7c. Teddy Gaines, CB (0/0) Cut; now with Bears.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. The NFL's worst run defense in 2002 must improve its size. John Randle shows an explosive first step when he's fresh but wears down late in games and may be a better fit as a situational pass rusher. He's 35 and missed four games because of a knee injury last year. Chad Eaton will be 31 this season. The team must improve depth at the position. Kentucky's Dewayne Robertson, Miami's William Joseph and Georgia's Johnathan Sullivan all should be available at No. 11.

2. Defensive end. Lamar King, who has yet to play a full season, remains a disappointment. Antonio Cochran is an unrestricted free agent who may not return. Texas' Cory Redding, Louisville's Dewayne White and Florida State's Alonzo Jackson all are projected Day 1 picks, and any of them could push King for playing time. Each has the upfield burst to improve one of the league's worst pass rushes.

3. Middle linebacker. Isaiah Kacyvenski struggled last year, finished the season on injured reserve and likely will be replaced. Although backup Orlando Huff did an adequate job, he lacks recognition skills and often was caught out of position. The team needs a linebacker who has the power to anchor against the interior run and the range to make plays from sideline to sideline. Syracuse's Clifton Smith, Mississippi State's Mario Haggan and Georgia's Tony Gilbert all could be available in the middle rounds.

4. Free safety. Marcus Robertson clearly has lost a step with age and doesn't make many big plays. Backup Curtis Fuller shows adequate range and is undersized. No. 3 Terreal Bierria is a liability in coverage and is better suited to play strong safety. The team needs a free safety with the speed to cover deep and the cover skills to compete for the starting job. North Carolina State's Terrence Holt, Tennessee's Julian Battle and Utah's Antwoine Sanders would cost the team a third-round pick but fit this mold.

5. Guard. Floyd Wedderburn has failed to take advantage of his opportunities to start, and Jerry Wunsch struggles with quicker defensive tackles in pass protection. Floyd Womack could move from tackle but lacks the mobility to pull and the speed to get downfield on screens. The team may have to sign a free agent to fill this need and use the draft to improve depth. Illinois' David Diehl, Penn State's Gus Felder and Northwestern's Jeff Roehl are projected late-round picks who could become NFL starters.

6. Punter. Though Jeff Feagles does an outstanding job of pinning teams deep, he never has had great leg strength and is an unrestricted free agent who may not return. If he leaves, the team likely will fill this need with a proven free agent but could draft a punter to compete in camp. Hawaii's Mat McBriar and Ohio State's Andy Groom have outstanding leg strength and should be available in the late rounds.

7. Cornerback. Ken Lucas and Shawn Springs make a solid starting tandem. But backup Willie Williams is a free agent and isn't expected to return, and Doug Evans no longer has the burst or change-of-direction skills to stay with slot receivers in man coverage. Seattle needs a corner with a combination of explosiveness and athletic ability to compete for the nickel back job. TCU's Jason Goss, Michigan State's Cedric Henry and Mississippi State's Korey Banks should be available late.

8. Wide receiver. No. 3 receiver Bobby Engram is aging and isn't a threat to turn a short gain into a big play. The team should draft a developmental player who eventually can replace Engram and who shows some elusiveness and burst after the catch. Oklahoma's Antwone Savage, TCU's Adrian Madise and Oregon's Keenan Howry are projected late-round picks who have big-play potential and experience returning kicks.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

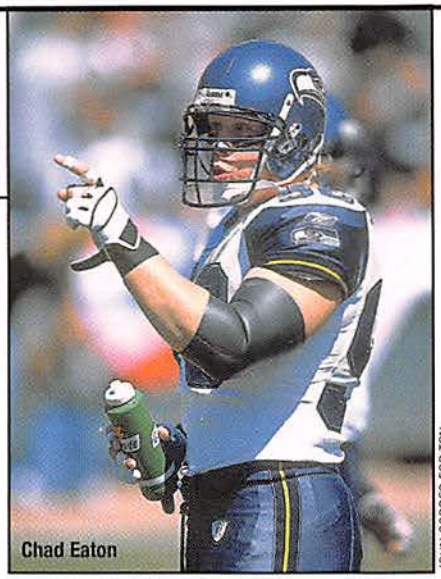
	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Matt Hasselbeck	LE	❑ Lamar King
	■ Trent Dilfer		❑ Anton Palepoi
FB	■ Mack Strong	LT	■ Chad Eaton
	❑ Heath Evans		❑ Cedric Woodard
RB	■ Shaun Alexander	RT	■ John Randle
	❑ Maurice Morris		❑ Rocky Bernard
WR	● Koren Robinson	RE	■ Antonio Cochran
	❑ James Williams		❑ Brandon Mitchell
WR	■ Darrell Jackson	OLB	■ Anthony Simmons
	■ Bobby Engram		❑ Marcus Bell
TE	❑ Itula Mili	MLB	❑ Orlando Huff
	■ Jerramy Stevens		❑ Isaiah Kacyvenski
LT	● Walter Jones	OLB	■ Chad Brown
	❑ Matt Hill		❑ Tim Terry
LG	■ Steve Hutchinson	LCB	■ Shawn Springs
	❑ Chris Gray		❑ Willie Williams
C	■ Robbie Tobeck	SS	■ Reggie Tongue
	❑ Chris Gray		❑ Harold Blackmon
RG	❑ Floyd Womack	FS	■ Marcus Robertson
	❑ Chris Gray		❑ Curtis Fuller
RT	■ Chris Terry	RCB	■ Ken Lucas
	❑ Jerry Wunsch		❑ Doug Evans
K	■ Rian Lindell	P	❑ Jeff Feagles

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Coach Mike Holmgren still will have lots of influence on draft day, but new general manager Bob Ferguson has the final say. The good news is the team finished strong and might be only a few players away from competing for a playoff spot in 2003. If a big, run-stuffing defensive tackle and an effective edge rusher is found in the first two rounds, the team will consider the draft a success regardless of its Day 2 picks.

Because there are six blue-chip first round defensive tackles, the team likely will have its choice of at least three at No. 11. Seattle wants a tackle with size, so Robertson, Sullivan or Joseph would be a good bet. If Seattle takes a tackle in the first round, drafting an end with pass-rushing skills such as Redding or White in the second round is a must. Before it gets too late in the draft, the team should fill its needs at inside linebacker and free safety.


Chad Eaton

JOHN CORDES FOR TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B-

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	7	9	12	10
Starters	1	2	2	3	0
Backups	0	1	5	7	9
Other teams	3	3	1	2	1
Out of NFL	3	1	1	0	0

The Seahawks have built a talented young receiving corps with 2001 first-round pick Koren Robinson and 2000 third-rounder Darrell Jackson. They have also improved their depth in the offensive line, and four of their last five first-round picks have played significant roles. But '99 first-round DE Lamar King has done little, and the failure to draft an effective interior run stuffer has proved costly.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Jerramy Stevens, TE (12/1) Should take over as the starter if he can stay healthy and out of trouble.

2a. Maurice Morris, RB (11/0) Was a big surprise as a return specialist and backup running back.

2b. Anton Palepoi, DE (13/1) Must improve pass-rushing skills to earn more playing time.

3. Kris Richard, CB (7/0) Was active for only seven games. Has size but cover skills must improve.

4. Terreal Bierria, DB (14/0) Is a big hitter against the run, but his coverage skills must improve.

5a. Rocky Bernard, DL (16/2) Is versatile, tough. Will continue to play at tackle and possibly at end.

5b. Ryan Hannam, TE (14/0) Will remain the No. 3 tight end behind Stevens and Itula Mili next season.

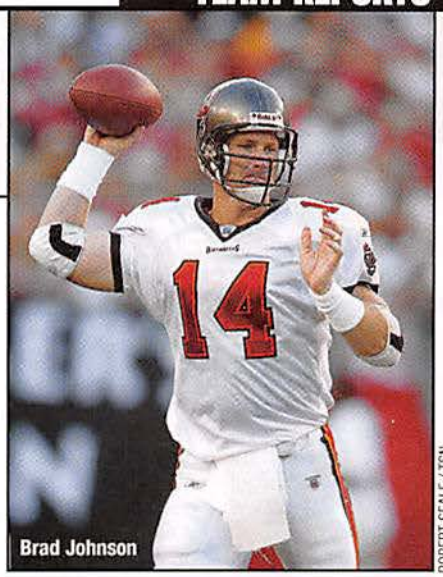
5c. Matt Hill, OT (13/0) Is athletic but did not show great strength or toughness.

6. Craig Jarrett, P (4/0*) Cut; signed by Redskins.

7. Jeff Kelly, QB (1/0) Team likes his athleticism and toughness and wants to keep him around.

**Games played with another NFL team*

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS


Brad Johnson

ROBERT SEALE / TSN

Team needs

1. Outside linebacker. Al Singleton did an adequate job as a first-time starter in 2002 but lacks the bulk to hold his ground consistently against the run. He's an unrestricted free agent who may not return. Backup Jack Golden has better size but lacks lower-body strength and doesn't show great burst to the ball. The team needs a strongside linebacker who has the power to stuff the run and the speed to stay with the tight end in coverage. TCU's LaMarcus McDonald, Oregon's Nick Barnett and Michigan's Victor Hobson all have the range and power to compete for starting jobs as rookies.

2. Free safety. Super Bowl MVP Dexter Jackson should draw attention from several teams and may be too expensive to retain. Backup Jermaine Phillips is strong against the run but makes too many mistakes in coverage and would struggle if forced into the starting lineup. Should Jackson go, this need could be filled with a proven free agent or an early-round pick. Tennessee's Julian Battle and Utah's Antwoine Sanders are adequate against the run and have the range to cover the deep half of the field in the Bucs' cover 2 scheme.

3. Running back. Michael Pittman was hindered by shaky offensive-line play last year but failed to live up to expectations. Aaron Stecker is a restricted free agent who could sign with another team. Mike Alstott should remain the short-yardage back but lacks the speed to excel in Jon Gruden's system. Pittman needs a backup—one who eventually will play a role like the one Charlie Garner plays for Oakland. Early rumors have Tampa Bay selecting Miami's Willis McGahee in the second round. USC's Justin Fargas also could fill this need.

4. Quarterback. Rob Johnson was unable to stay healthy in a backup role and probably won't be back. No. 3 Shaun King also is a free agent, and Joe Hamilton is coming off a knee injury that sidelined him last season. Brad Johnson was nicked up last season and missed three games, so the team could re-sign King or sign another veteran to compete with Hamilton for the backup role. It then could draft a developmental quarterback such as Iowa State's Seneca Wallace or Iowa's Brad Banks to challenge for the No. 3 slot.

5. Offensive tackle. Though left tackle Roman Oben exceeded expectations last year, he's a better fit as a reserve. And backup Lomas Brown could retire. Both are unrestricted free agents, and it's unlikely both will return, so look for the team to sign a free agent. It also will add a prospect to push right tackle Kenyatta Walker in camp. Hawaii's Wayne Hunter and Memphis' Wade Smith are projected middle-round picks who flash the potential to be NFL starters.

6. Punter. Tom Tupa is an adequate directional kicker, but he is an unrestricted free agent and not expected to re-sign. The team likely will bring in a proven veteran to compete for the starting job. It could use a late-round pick on a punter. Ohio State's Andy Groom, Hawaii's Mat McBriar and Maryland's Brooks Barnard all have above-average leg strength.

7. Middle linebacker. Shelton Quarles excelled in 2002 but is an unrestricted free agent and may be too expensive to bring back. Backup Nate Webster is capable of replacing Quarles as the starter, but if he does, the depth will be affected. Arizona's Lance Briggs, Texas Tech's Lawrence Flugence and Tennessee's Keyon Whiteside are athletic inside linebackers who can provide depth and contribute on special teams.

8. Tight end. Ken Dilger is sound but no longer has the speed to stretch defenses. Backup Rickey Dudley has better size and speed but is inconsistent and may not be back. If Dudley signs with another team, the Bucs should draft a developmental receiving tight end with the burst and athletic ability to complement Dilger. Florida's Aaron Walker, Mississippi State's Donald Lee and Oregon's George Wrighster all would fit in the scheme.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	■ Brad Johnson	LE	■ Greg Spires
	❑ Shaun King		❑ Ellis Wyms
FB	■ Mike Alstott	NT	● Anthony McFarland
	❑ Jameel Cook		■ Chartric Darby
RB	■ Michael Pittman	DT	● Warren Sapp
	❑ Aaron Stecker		■ Chartric Darby
WR	● Keyshawn Johnson	RE	● Simeon Rice
	❑ Karl Williams		❑ Corey Smith
WR	■ Keenan McCardell	SLB	■ Al Singleton
	■ Joe Jurevicius		❑ Jack Golden
TE	■ Ken Dilger	MLB	■ Shelton Quarles
	❑ Rickey Dudley		❑ Nate Webster
LT	❑ Roman Oben	WLB	● Derrick Brooks
	❑ Lomas Brown		❑ Ryan Nece
LG	■ Kerry Jenkins	LCB	■ Brian Kelly
	❑ Todd Washington		■ Dwight Smith
C	■ Jeff Christy	SS	● John Lynch
	❑ Todd Washington		❑ John Howell
RG	■ Cosey Coleman	FS	■ Dexter Jackson
	❑ Todd Washington		❑ Jermaine Phillips
RT	■ Kenyatta Walker	RCB	● Ronde Barber
	❑ Cornell Green		❑ Tim Wansley
K	● Martin Gramatica	P	❑ Tom Tupa

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	9	5	9	8
Starters	1	3	1	1	0
Backups	1	1	2	4	4
Other teams	3	2	2	3	2
Out of NFL	2	3	0	1	2

For a team that has had just two first-round picks since 1998, the Buccaneers have drafted surprisingly well. They improved their secondary with 1998 second-round CB Brian Kelly and 1999 fourth-round S Dexter Jackson, the Super Bowl MVP. However, the offensive line continues to have problems in pass protection, and 2001 first-round OT Kenyatta Walker remains inconsistent.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

3. Marquise Walker, WR (0/0) Ended season on injured reserve with a thumb injury. Has good size but is stuck behind veterans.

4. Travis Stephens, RB (1/0) Spent much of '02 on injured reserve with a toe injury. Will push to back up Michael Pittman next season.

5. Jermaine Phillips, S (16/0) Was Dexter Jackson's backup last year and is likely to remain in that role. Unpolished, but with starter's tools.

6. John Stamper, DE (4/0*) Cut; signed by Bears.

7a. Tim Wansley, CB (1/0) Is a good fit as a slot cover corner and could push Corey Ivy for the No. 4 cornerback spot next season.

7b. Tracey Wistrom, TE (0/0) No longer in NFL.

7c. Aaron Lockett, WR (0/0) No longer in NFL.

7d. Zack Quaccia, C (0/0) Cut; signed by Chargers.

**Games played with another NFL team*

The outlook

The team still is paying for its acquisition of Gruden—it is without its first-round pick for the second consecutive year. The Bucs won't select until the last pick of the second round—64th overall. That's what makes the McGahee rumors interesting. He may not be ready to play as a rookie, but with Alstott, Pittman and others shouldering the load, McGahee would have time to recuperate from a severe knee injury.

The other option is to draft a back later or sign a free agent. In that event, they likely would draft the best available outside linebacker at the 64th spot. Barnett and Hobson are reasonable options. The offense lacks speed at the skill positions, so look for the team to draft a receiver and a tight end in addition to a running back. Other than linebacker, the only defensive position the team could use an early pick on is free safety.

TENNESSEE TITANS

Team needs

1. Wide receiver. Kevin Dyson isn't expected to return, and though Drew Bennett and Justin McCareins are good backups, neither appears ready to start. Derrick Mason lacks the speed and size of a prototypical No. 1. The team needs a receiver who can stretch the defense and open the short-to-intermediate passing lanes for Mason. Tennessee's Kelley Washington, Penn State's Bryant Johnson and Stanford's Teyo Johnson all have the combination of size and speed and could be available.

2. Running back. Eddie George is not the dominant back he once was, and his career could be on the downside. Backup Robert Holcombe has size but lacks explosiveness. The team needs a back who has the power and bulk to keep George fresh and replace him if he struggles or needs a rest. Penn State's Larry Johnson would cost the team its first-round pick, but he excels running between the tackles and would be an excellent fit.

3. Guard. The team is expected to try to re-sign Zach Piller and Tom Ackerman, who backs up at two positions and can long-snap. But Piller missed five games the last two seasons, and the depth must be addressed. The team runs a ball-control offense predicated on a power running game and should add a guard who can get movement at the point of attack. Virginia Tech's Anthony Davis, Texas A&M's Taylor Whitley and Illinois' David Diehl are projected middle-round picks who could become quality starters and provide instant depth.

4. Defensive tackle. Albert Haynesworth struggled at times, but has the power to develop into a dominant interior run stuffer. Henry Ford probably will become a cap casualty, and John Thornton likely will sign with another team. Backup Robaire Smith lacks size and wears down when teams run at him. The team needs a tackle who has an explosive first step to take advantage of Haynesworth attracting double-teams. Clemson's Nick Eason, Oregon State's Eric Manning or Penn State's Anthony Adams could complement Haynesworth.

5. Cornerback. Dainon Sidney probably won't be re-signed, Mike Echols is coming off a broken leg, and Tony Beckham lacks ideal cover skills. Because the team runs its nickel package often, depth is critical. The secondary also lacks speed. The team could draft two corners but must add a corner who can push Echols for the nickel job. Texas' Roderick Babers, SMU's Kevin Garrett and UCLA's Ricky Manning could contribute early, and all have the speed to recover when caught out of position.

6. Middle linebacker. When healthy, Randall Godfrey is one of the best playmaking interior linebackers in the league. But if he doesn't agree to restructure his contract, he'll be released. Backup Frank Chamberlin is strictly a depth player. Rocky Calmus played well in 2002 but lacks the bulk to hold his ground against power running games. The team needs a linebacker who can push Calmus for playing time on running downs should Godfrey leave. Syracuse's Clifton Smith or Georgia's Tony Gilbert could slip to the middle rounds.

7. Center. Gennaro DiNapoli played well in his first year as starter, but backup Aaron Graham isn't expected to re-sign and the team needs depth. DiNapoli lacks ideal size and power, so the team should look for a developmental center who has the potential to develop into a dominant run blocker. Colorado's Wayne Lucier and Northwestern's Austin King are projected late-round picks.

8. Fullback. With the emphasis on one-back sets, Greg Comella was underused last year and could be released. Mike Green is more of a power running back than a fullback. The team needs a dominant lead blocker who consistently can create running lanes. Western Kentucky's Jeremi Johnson, Boston College's J.P. Comella and Maryland's James Lynch could fill this need.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

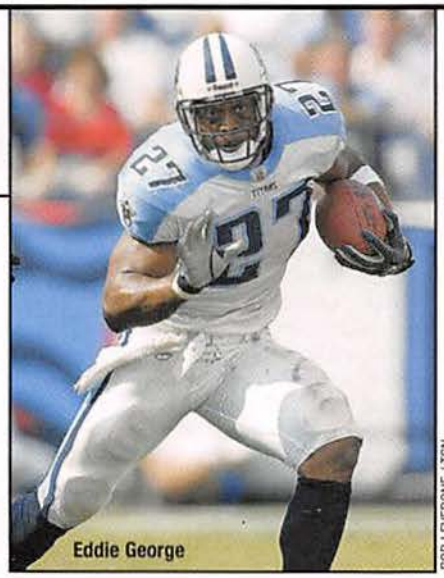
	Offense		Defense
QB	● Steve McNair	LE	■ Kevin Carter
	■ Neil O'Donnell		■ Jevon Kearse
RB	■ Eddie George	LT	❑ Robaire Smith
	❑ Robert Holcombe		■ Albert Haynesworth
WR	❑ Justin McCareins	RT	■ Albert Haynesworth
	❑ Eddie Berlin		❑ Robaire Smith
WR	■ Derrick Mason	RE	■ Jevon Kearse
	❑ Drew Bennett		❑ Carlos Hall
TE	■ Erron Kinney	LLB	■ Peter Sirmon
	❑ Shad Meier		❑ Rocky Calmus
H-B	■ Frank Wycheck	MLB	■ Frank Chamberlin
	❑ Shad Meier		❑ Rocky Calmus
LT	■ Brad Hopkins	RLB	● Keith Bulluck
	❑ Jason Mathews		❑ Rocky Boiman
LG	■ Zach Piller	LCB	❑ Andre Dyson
	❑ Tom Ackerman		❑ Tony Beckham
C	■ Gennaro DiNapoli	SS	■ Tank Williams
	❑ Aaron Graham		❑ Aric Morris
RG	■ Benji Olson	FS	■ Lance Schulters
	❑ Tom Ackerman		❑ Rich Coady
RT	■ Fred Miller	RCB	■ Samari Rolle
	❑ Jason Mathews		❑ Donald Mitchell
K	■ Joe Nedney	P	■ Craig Hentrich

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

The outlook

Jeff Fisher says he wants to draft at least one and maybe two cornerbacks. The team will look to get younger and improve its depth at guard and defensive tackle. But the main objective should be improving the offensive-skill positions: wide receiver and running back. At the 28th pick overall, there won't be a receiver with great value, but Larry Johnson still could be available. The team could think about selecting a small, quick back such as Virginia Tech's Lee Suggs or Oregon's Onterrio Smith, but this is an offense that needs a big, punishing back, and George no longer has the burst to provide full-time starter's production. So Johnson makes the most sense.

If the team goes with a running back in the first round, it should draft a receiver such as Washington, Bryant Johnson or Teyo Johnson with its second pick. After that, Fisher likely will draft the cornerback he wants.



Eddie George

BOB LEVERONE / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY C+

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	8	8	10	7	10
Starters	3	3	3	1	1
Backups	1	2	5	3	9
Other teams	1	0	1	3	0
Out of NFL	3	3	1	0	0

2002 seventh-round DE Carlos Hall made an immediate impact and the healthy return of 1999 first-round DE Jevon Kearse should give the team an explosive pass rush in 2003. The secondary has improved but should be better; the Titans have used three of their last four second-round picks on DBs. 1998 first-round WR Kevin Dyson—taken ahead of Randy Moss—has been a disappointment.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Albert Haynesworth, DT (16/3) Wasn't an immediate impact player but has the tools and size to become dominant.

2. Tank Williams, S (16/16) Became the starter at strong safety and showed big-play ability.

3. Rocky Calmus, LB (13/1) Got some playing time and fared well. Is backing up Peter Sirmon for now.

4a. Mike Echols, DB (4/0) Speedy corner who spent the season on I.R. with a leg injury.

4b. Tony Beckham, CB (14/0) Will have a chance to become a nickel and/or dime back.

4c. Rocky Boiman, LB (16/0) Provides nice depth behind emerging star Keith Bulluck.

5. Jake Schifino, WR (0/0) Was placed on injured reserve with a hamstring injury.

6. Justin Hartwig, G (3/0) Backed up Benji Olson.

7a. Darrell Hill, WR (7/0) Will have to show improved route-running skills to make the roster.

7b. Carlos Hall, DE (15/13) Had eight sacks in place of Jevon Kearse. Provides depth as a rusher.

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WASHINGTON REDSKINS

Team needs

1. Defensive tackle. Free agent Daryl Gardener might be too expensive to retain. Dan Wilkinson will be released unless he restructures his contract, and Santana Dotson isn't expected back. Backup Delbert Cowsette provides adequate depth but lacks the bulk to anchor against the run and would struggle if forced to start. The team needs a tackle with the size to clog up the middle and the power to collapse the pocket. Kentucky's Dewayne Robertson, Georgia's Johnathan Sullivan, Miami's William Joseph or Oklahoma State's Kevin Williams makes sense.

2. Wide receiver. Derrius Thompson is an unrestricted free agent who lacks deep speed and probably won't be back. Although No. 3 Darnerien McCants is a threat to make the big play downfield, he's inconsistent and not ready to start. The team needs a receiver who can start opposite Rod Gardner and excel in Steve Spurrier's schemes. Florida's Taylor Jacobs is a possibility if the team trades down in the first round, but he's not worth drafting at No. 13. Illinois' Brandon Lloyd and Tennessee's Kelley Washington are steals if either is around in the middle of Round 2.

3. Guard. The team wants two new starting guards. It will try to replace David Loverne, and even if unrestricted free agent Tre' Johnson is re-signed, he probably will be brought back as a reserve. The team traded for Brenden Stai last summer, but he isn't a good fit. The team likely will sign a free agent, and then it could use a third-round pick on a guard who could compete for the other starting spot. Texas' Derrick Dockery or Southern Mississippi's Torrin Tucker could provide immediate help.

4. Defensive end. Bruce Smith still is capable of producing as a situational pass rusher but no longer has the endurance of a starter. LaDairis Jackson is coming off a knee injury. Renaldo Wynn is consistent and will return as a starter, but the team needs to start thinking about the future. Wake Forest's Calvin Pace, Miami's Andrew Williams or Cincinnati's Antwan Peek would make sense.

5. Safety. The solid play of strong safety Ifeanyi Ohalete has made Sam Shade expendable. Free safety David Terrell will return, but he struggled at times and could be replaced. Backup Andre Lott will have an opportunity to win a starting job but is a developmental player. The team should draft a versatile safety to challenge Terrell and provide quality depth behind Ohalete. Arkansas' Ken Hamlin, Florida's Todd Johnson and Notre Dame's Gerome Sapp are versatile players who could fall to the second day of the draft.

6. Tight end. Backup Walter Rasby is an effective in-line blocker but offers little as a receiver. Zeron Flemister and Robert Royal have excellent athletic ability and the potential to become productive receivers. Because Royal should develop into an efficient blocker, the team should draft a receiving tight end who has the speed to stretch opposing defenses and the hands to make the tough catch. Rutgers' L.J. Smith or St. Cloud State's Matt Huebner should be available late.

7. Running back. With Stephen Davis a likely cap casualty, Ladell Betts and Kenny Watson are expected to compete for the starting job. Betts has better size than Watson, but Watson is the better receiver. So they likely will split time, and the team will need depth. It would be wise to use a late-round pick on a back who has some speed and the receiving skills to to make an impact in Steve Spurrier's scheme. The team could take Oklahoma's Quentin Griffin, USC's Sultan McCullough or LSU's Domanick Davis in a late round.

8. Kicker. Three kickers were signed last year, ending with Jose Cortez, who was inconsistent and failed to get depth on kickoffs. The team probably will bring in a free agent to compete in camp, but it also could use a draft pick to ensure it doesn't repeat last year's debacle. Tulane's Seth Marler and Cincinnati's Jonathan Ruffin are two of the top kicking prospects.

The outlook

Daniel Snyder is a wheeler-dealer type who likes to make a splash on draft day. Spurrier doesn't mind the sizzle himself, but no matter what the team does, it simply has too many needs to give up picks to trade up. A legitimate No. 1 wide receiver with speed is needed to play opposite Gardner.

However, there won't be a receiver on the board who will be worth drafting at No. 13. It makes more sense for the team to draft one of the top six defensive tackles with its first pick, then draft a wideout such as Illinois' Lloyd or Tennessee's Washington in the second round.

The team traded its fifth-round selection to Detroit for Stai, so it can't afford to veer from the plan of addressing needs at guard and defensive end with two of its top four picks.

PROJECTED DEPTH CHART

	Offense		Defense
QB	❑ Patrick Ramsey	LE	■ Renaldo Wynn
	❑ Danny Wuerffel		❑ Carl Powell
FB	❑ Bryan Johnson	LT	❑ Carl Powell
	❑ Rock Cartwright		❑ Delbert Cowsette
RB	❑ Kenny Watson	RT	■ Daryl Gardener
	❑ Ladell Betts		❑ Carl Powell
WR	■ Rod Gardner	RE	❑ Bruce Smith
	❑ Darnerian McCants		❑ LaDairis Jackson
WR	❑ Derrius Thompson	SLB	● LaVar Arrington
	❑ Darnerien McCants		❑ Lemar Marshall
TE	❑ Walter Rasby	MLB	■ Jeremiah Trotter
	❑ Zeron Flemister		❑ Kevin Mitchell
LT	● Chris Samuels	WLB	■ Jessie Armstead
	❑ Alex Sulfsted		❑ Antonio Pierce
LG	❑ David Loverne	LCB	● Champ Bailey
	❑ Alex Sulfsted		❑ Rashad Bauman
C	■ Larry Moore	SS	❑ Ifeanyi Ohalete
	❑ Wilbert Brown		❑ Ricot Joseph
RG	❑ Tre' Johnson	FS	■ David Terrell
	❑ Wilbert Brown		❑ Andre Lott
RT	● Jon Jansen	RCB	■ Fred Smoot
	❑ Alex Sulfsted		❑ Rashad Bauman
K	❑ Jose Cortez	P	■ Bryan Barker

● Can play for any team ■ Solid player
❑ Fringe player

Renaldo Wynn

ALBERT DICKSON / TSN

RECENT HISTORY

5-YEAR TALLY B

Year	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Total picks	7	6	8	5	10
Starters	1	2	2	2	1
Backups	0	0	3	1	7
Other teams	3	0	2	2	2
Out of NFL	3	4	1	0	0

Although CB Champ Bailey and LB LaVar Arrington, two former first-round picks, have significantly improved the defense, 2001 second-round CB Fred Smoot regressed last year and the Redskins' decision to draft just two defensive tackles since '98 (both after the fourth round) has created a depth problem on the line. The team also has failed to address problems along the interior of the O-line.

2002 DRAFT (Games played/games started)

1. Patrick Ramsey, QB (10/5) Led the team in passing as an on-again, off-again starter. Showed some flashes but needs more time to develop.

2. Ladell Betts, RB (11/0) His hands make him a good fit in Spurrier's offense, but he has a long way to go before being given a starting job.

3a. Rashad Bauman, CB (16/0) A capable cover man. Should succeed D. Green as the nickel corner.

3b. Cliff Russell, WR (0/0) Possesses great speed but needs a lot of refinement.

5a. Andre Lott, S (16/0) With maturity, he could become a starter.

5b. Robert Royal, TE (0/0) Could be a factor in short-yardage and goal-line passing situations.

6. Reggie Coleman, OT (0/0) Cut; signed by Bengals.

7a. Jeff Grau, TE (16/0) Cut; signed by Cowboys.

7b. Greg Scott, DE (2/0) Lacks speed outside and has trouble holding ground against the run inside.

7c. Rock Cartwright, RB (16/0) Tough runner with good hands but doesn't have breakaway speed.

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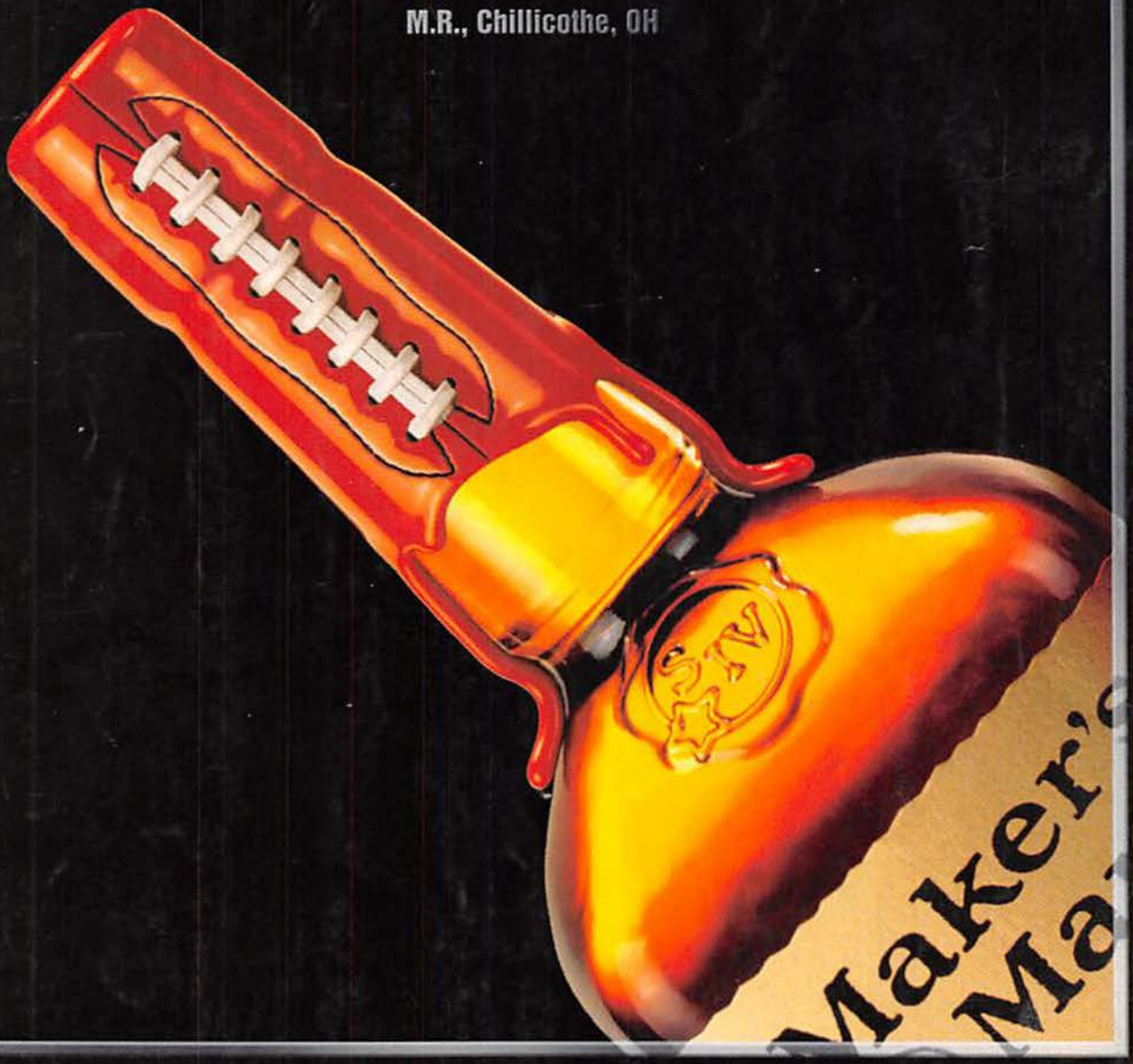

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